

PLAYS,

BY

MOLIERE.

THE ROMANTIC LADIES,
DON GARCIA OF NAVARRE,
THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS,
THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES,
THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES CRITICISED,
AND
THE IMPROMPTU OF VERSAILLES.

A NEW TRANSLATION.



BERWICK:
PRINTED FOR R. TAYLOR.
MDCCLXX.

Malone 1013.

✓
R

V

THE
ROMANTIC LADIES.

A
COMEDY.

VOL. II.

A

The R
a&th
bon

Tliere's
best w
piece,
intrig
by hi
ed to
which

T
made
in fas
which
which
into c
comm
junct

DIES
cess k
made
secon
four
forma
and g
folly.
prefer
" app
" fo
" me
" ad

The ROMANTIC LADIES, a Comedy of One Act, acted at Paris, at the Theatre of the Little Bourbon, the 18th of November, 1659.

THE comedy of the ROMANTIC LADIES deserves to be ranked among the best of Moliere's performances, although it is not one of the best with regard to the plot. He ventured, in this piece, to forsake the common path of complicated intrigues, to lead us in a comic road, first known by him. The main end of a good comedy appeared to him to be, to criticise the follies and manners which were peculiar to his time.

THE passion for wit, or rather the abuse they made of it, was a kind of contagious malady then in fashion. The forced bombast style in romances, which the women admired for the very reasons which have since discredited those works, had got into conversation: In a word, both the quality and common people were affected; and at this conjuncture did the comedy of the ROMANTIC LADIES make its appearance; never was greater success known; the prodigious number of spectators made the company demand double prices at the second representation of it, and the piece run for four months together: It produced a general reformation, people saw themselves in it, laughed, and gave the truest applause to it by forsaking their folly. Mr. Menage, who assisted at the first representation, said to Chapelaine, "You and I both
 " approved of all these follies which have been now
 " so excellently and so sensibly criticized; believe
 " me, we must burn what we have admired, and
 " admire what we have burnt." This acknowledg-

ment was only the reflection of a man of sense who found himself undeceived; but the saying of an old man, who in the middle of the pit cried out through instinct, "Take courage, Moliere, "this is a good comedy," is the pure expression of nature, which shews how much the human mind is swayed by truth.

A C T O R S.

LA GRANGE.

DU CROISY.

GORGIBUS, a rich Citizen.

MAGDALEN, Daughter of
Gorgibus.

} The Romantic
Ladies.

CATHOS, Niece of Gorgibus.

MAROT, Maid to the Romantic Ladies.

ALMANZOR, Valet to the Romantic Ladies.

MARQUIS DE MASCARILLE, La Grange's Valet.

VISCOUNT JODELET, Du Croisy's Footman.

LUCILIA.

CELIMENE. } Neighbours to Gorgibus.

TWO CHAIRMEN.

FIDLERS.

SCENE Paris, in Gorgibus's house.



T H E
ROMANTIC LADIES.

SCENE I.

LA GRANGE, DU CROISY.

DU CROISY.

R. La Grange.

M. La Grange. What?

Du Croisy. Look at me a little without laughing.

La Grange. Well, I do look at you.

Du Croisy. What think you of our visit? — are you pleased with it?

La Grange. Why, do you think we have any reason to be so?

Du Croisy. Indeed, I think we have not much.

La Grange. For my part, I own to you, that I am quite shocked at it. — Pray now, did ever any body behold a couple of foolish gypsies give themselves such airs as these, or two men treated so insolently as we have been? — They could hardly condescend to order chairs for us. — I never saw such whispering as there was between them; such yawning, such rubbing of eyes, and enquiring so often what o'clock it was. Besides, we could get them to say nothing but yes or no to all

we could say to them. In short, it must be confessed, that if we had been the greatest scoundrels in the world, they could not use us worse than they have done.

Du Croisy. I think you seem to take it much to heart.

La Grange. I do, and am determined to revenge myself for this impertinence.—I know well enough the reason of their slighting us. The conceited air has not infected Paris only, but has extended its influence to the country towns, and our ridiculous nymphs have sucked in their share of it. In a word, they are a strange medley of coquetry and affectation. I plainly see what sort of persons are likely to meet with a favourable reception from them, and if you will trust me, we will play them a trick shall make them see their folly, and teach them to distinguish people a little better.

Du Croisy. How can this be done?

La Grange. I have an arch dog of a footman, named Mascarille, who passes for a sort of a wit, in the opinion of many people; for nothing now-a-days is cheaper than wit. This fellow has taken it into his head, forsooth, to set up for a person of quality. He usually values himself for intrigues and poetry, and despises other valets so much as to call them brutes.

Du Croisy. Well; what mean you to do with him?

La Grange. I will tell you. He shall——But let us retire; I will disclose my scheme to you as we go along.

S C E N E II.

GORGIBUS, DU CROISY, LA GRANGE.

GORGIBUS.

WELL, gentlemen, you have seen my daughter and niece; how stand matters between you and them? What success have you had from your visit?

La Grange. That is a thing you may better learn from them than us. All we can say to you, is, that we return you thanks for the favour you intended us, and remain your most humble servants.

Gorgibus alone.] Hey-day! methinks they seem dissatisfied! what can be the meaning of this? I must enquire. Soho there!

S C E N E III.

GORGIBUS, MAROT.

MAROT.

DID you call, Sir?

Gorgibus. Yes, where are your mistresses?

Marot. In their closet, Sir.

Gorgibus. What are they doing?

Marot. They are making lip-falve.

Gorgibus. Bid them come down.——[Alone.] These hussies, with their lip-falve, have, I think, a mind to ruin me. The house is filled with nothing but whites of eggs, nun's cream, and a thousand other fooleries. They have used, since we came hither, the lard of a dozen hogs at least; and four

servants might be daily fed with the legs of mutton they destroy.

S C E N E IV.

MAGDALEN, CATHOS, GORGIBUS.

GORGIBUS.

THERE is great need, indeed, of all this time and expence to grease your muzzles.—Inform me, pray, how you have behaved to these gentlemen, that I saw them go away with so much coldness. Did not I charge you to receive them as persons that I intended for your husbands?

Magdalen. Dear father, what regard would you have us pay to the irregular proceedings of these people?

Cathos. Dear uncle, can a woman of any taste or fashion be able to reconcile herself to men of their figure?

Gorgibus. What see you in them to find fault with?

Magdalen. Fine galantry of theirs, indeed!—Would you believe it, Sir? they began with proposing marriage to us.

Gorgibus. With what would you have them begin? with whoring?—Is not this a way of acting which both of you have reason to approve of as well as I? Can any thing be a greater sign of their good intentions? And that holy tie they desire, is it not a proof of the fairness of their designs?

Magdalen. O father! what you say is extremely like a citizen. I really blush to hear you deliver yourself in such uncouth terms. Indeed, papa,

you should learn to speak with a more courtly air.

Gorgibus. I've nothing to do with your airs.—I tell you, that matrimony is an holy and a sacred thing, and to begin with that is to act like honest people.

Magdalen. Lard! were the whole world like you, a romance would soon draw to a conclusion! what a fine thing it would have been if Cyrus had immediately married Mandana, and if Aronce had been espoused in all haste to Clelia!

Gorgibus. What is this the talks of?

Magdalen. Sir, my cousin will tell you as well as me, that matrimony ought never to be brought about till after other adventures.—A lover who would make himself agreeable, should begin his declaration with fine sentiments, short and passionate speeches; and make his addreses in the necessary forms.—In the first place, he should behold, either at church, or in the park, or at some public ceremony, the person of whom he becomes enamoured: or, else, he should be fatally introduced to her by a relation or a friend, and go from her melancholy and pensive. He should conceal his flame, for some time, from the beloved object, but, however, make her frequent visits, at which some discourse about galantry never fails to be brought upon the carpet to exercise the wits of the company——When the time comes to make his declaration, which should always be contrived to happen in some shady walk or arbour, while the company is at some distance in the garden; it should be accompanied with a pressing earnestness, and sudden starts of passion, which gives occasion for the fair one to exercise her rigour, and banish the too pre-

sumptuous lover, for some time, from her presence. He finds afterwards the way to pacify us, to accustom us insensibly to hear his passion, and to draw from us that confession which causes so much trouble.—Then follow the adventures; the rivals that thwart an established inclination, the persecutions of fathers, the jealousies arising from false appearances, the complainings, the running off with, and its consequences. This is the manner in which things are to be conducted according to the modes of taste; and these are the rules which no lover can dispense with observing in a polite courtship—But to come point blank to the conjugal union! to make no love but by making the marriage contract, and take a romance just by the tail! in short, dear father, nothing can be more mechanic than such a proceeding, and I am ready to faint at the very thoughts of it.

Gorgibus. What the devil of nonsense is this I hear? Where the pox did you learn this lofty stile?

Cathos. In short, uncle, my cousin tells you the truth of the matter. How is it possible to shew countenance to persons who are the very antipodes of all politeness? I will lay a wager they have never seen the map of tenderness, and that fond epistles, little disquietudes, polite letters, and sprightly veries are regions to them unknown. Do not you observe their whole person shews it, and that they have nothing of the air which gives one at first sight a good opinion of people?—And then to make a love-visit without a snuff-box! in a plain hat! a head with the locks irregular! and a habit indigent of embroidery!—heavens! what lovers are these! what a stinginess in dress! what a bar-

renness of conversation! it is over with them presently, they keep it not up at all. I took notice likewise of the clumsiness of their neckcloths, and the cut of their cloaths, which looked as if they were of the last age.

Gorgibus. Zounds! I believe the girls are both mad! I do not know one word in ten they speak. Heark'e, Magdalen, and you, Cathos.

Magdalen. Ah! pray, father, leave off these strange names, they sound so horribly unfashionable!

Gorgibus. Strange names! are they not your christian names?

Magdalen. Lard! how vulgar you are!—for my part, one thing I wonder at, is how you could be the father of a girl of my taste and spirit. Did you ever hear Cathos or Magdalen mentioned in genteel stile? Why, one of these names is alone sufficient to spoil the best romance in the world.

Cathos. Really, uncle, an ear that is a little delicate suffers extremely at hearing these words pronounced; and the name of Polixena, which my cousin has chosen, and that of Amintha which I give myself, have something so inexpressibly graceful, that—

Gorgibus. Heark'e,—there needs but one word. I do not know that you have other names than what were given you by your godfathers and godmothers; and as to the gentlemen in question, I am acquainted both with their families and their fortunes, and positively resolve that they shall be your husbands. I am tired of keeping you upon my hands, and the care of two such flirts as you are, is enough to make any sober man mad.

Cathos. For my part, uncle, all I can say is, that

I think matrimony a mighty shocking thing. How can one endure the thought of lying by the side of a naked man? I am ready to faint at the thoughts of it?

Magdalen. Give us leave to take breath a little amongst the beau monde of Paris, where we are but just arrived. Permit us to form the contexture of our romance at leisure, and do not hurry on the conclusion in such a manner.

Gorgibus aside.] There is not the least doubt of it; they are quite distracted [Aloud.] Once more, I tell you, I comprehend nothing of all this nonsense, but I am resolved to be obeyed. And, to cut short all further disputes, you must either determine to marry in a very short time, or be shut up in a nunnery for life. So now you know my resolution.

SCENE V.

CATHOS, MAGDALEN.

CATHOS.

LARD! my dear, how is thy father immerfed in matter! how grofs is his understanding! and how unenlightened his mental faculties.

Magdalen. What would you have, my dear? I am in confufion for him.—I can hardly persuade myself that I am indeed his daughter, but believe fome adventure one time or other will happen to discover a more illuftrious defcent.

Cathos. Nothing fo probable. And, for my part, I declare to you, coufin, when I confider myfelf, I—

S C E N E VI.

CATHOS, MAGDALEN, MAROT.

MAROT.

HERE is a footman asks if you are at home, and says, his master would come to see you.

Magdalen. Learn, creature, to express thyself with more delicacy. You should say, Ladies, an emissary attends below, to know if it is convenient for you to become visible.

Marot. Lord bless me! I do not understand your Latin, and hard words, not I,—I never studied philosophy, as you have done in Sirrus the Great.

Magdalen. Impertinent creature! how can this be endured!—Canst thou tell who is the master of this footman?

Marot. He told me it was the marquis de Mascarille.

Magdalen. Ah! my dear! a marquis, a marquis!—Well, go tell him we are visible.—This must certainly be a wit, who has heard of our arrival.

Cathos. Undoubtedly, my dear.

Magdalen. He must be received below in the parlour rather than in our chamber; let us adjust our hair a little, and maintain our character.—Come in hither quickly, and hold to us the counsellor of the graces.

Marot. O' my faith, I cannot tell what creature that is; you must talk to me like a Christian if you would have me understand you.

Cathos. Bring us the looking-glass, you ignorant wretch! and take care not to contaminate its

purity with the reflection of your gross image.

[Exeunt.]

S C E N E VII.

MASCARILLE and two CHAIRMEN.

MASCARILLE.

HOLD, chairmen, hold. La, la, la, la, la, la—I think those varlets have a mind to shake me to a jelly, by jumbling me against the walls and pavement.

1. Chairman. Ay, marry: because the gate is narrow, and you would make us come quite in with you.

Mascarille. I think so truly—Would you have me expose the delicacy of my features to the inclemency of the rainy season, you rascals, and let the dirt receive the impression of my shoes?—begone: take away your chair.

2. Chairman. Then, please to pay us, Sir.

Mascarille. Hem!

2. Chairman. Please to give us our money, Sir.

Mascarille, giving him a blow.] Insolent rascal! to ask a man of quality for money.

2. Chairman. Are poor people to be paid thus? and will your quality get a dinner for us?

Mascarille. Ha, ha, ha, I shall teach you better manners than to stand parlying with a gentleman.

1. Chairman, taking one of the poles of his chair.] Come, pay us quickly.

Mascarille. What!

1. Chairman. I say, I will have the money this moment.

Mascarille. Oh! this man talks reason.

1. Chairman. Make haste then.

Mascarille. Ay, you speak properly, for your part: but the other is a rogue that knows not what he says.—There: are you contented?

1. Chairman. No, I am not contented, you struck my companion; and— [Holding up his pole.

Mascarille. Hold, there, that is for the blow.—People may get any thing of me, when they ask for it in a proper manner.—Well, vanish now, and call for me again to carry me to court.

SCENE VIII.

MAROT, MASCARILLE.

MAROT.

SIR, my mistresses will come presently.
Mascarille. Pray do not let the ladies hurry themselves, I am perfectly well situated to attend their leisure.

Marot. They are here.

SCENE IX.

MAGDALEN, CATHOS, MASCARILLE, AL-
MANZOR.

MASCARILLE, after having saluted them.

LADIES, you will undoubtedly be surprised at the boldness of my visit: but your reputation brings this unlucky affair upon you, and merit has for me such potent charms, that I run every where after it.

Magdalen. If you are in quest of merit, Sir, I am afraid you have mistaken the spot.

Cathos. To find merit at our house, you must have brought it hither yourself.

Mascarille. Ah! I engage to prove the contrary.—Fame has done justice to your deserts, and you absolutely *pique*, *repique*, and *capot* all that is polite in Paris.

Magdalen. Your complaisance, Sir, makes you too liberal in your praises; my cousin and I shall endeavour not to give too much credit to your polite adulation.

Cathos. My dear, we should call for chairs.

Magdalen. Here, Almanzor.

Almanzor. Madam.

Magdalen. Quick, quick, convey us hither the conveniencies of conversation.

Mascarille. But hold, am I safe here?

Exit Almanzor:

Cathos. What do you mean?

Mascarille. I fear some design against my heart, some attempt upon my freedom. These eyes seem to me as if they took delight in triumphing over the sufferings of an helpless heart.—What the duce! do they put themselves upon their murdering guard as soon as one comes near them? Ah! by my faith, I am suspicious of them, and must either scamper away, or expect city-security that they shall not do me mischief.

Magdalen. My dear, how infinitely sprightly he is!

Cathos. The very quintessence of wit and politeness.

Magdalen. Fear nothing, our eyes have no ill designs, and your heart may be well assured of their good behaviour.

Cathos. But, good Sir, be not inexorable to that

elbow-chair, which has so long extended its arms to embrace you.

Mascarille, adjusting himself at a glass.] Well, ladies, how do you like Paris?

Magdalen. Alas! what can we say of it? we must be the very antipodes to all taste and knowledge, not to confess that Paris is the grand cabinet of wonders, the center of good taste, wit, and gallantry.

Mascarille. I think, for my part, that out of Paris there is no living for people of fashion.

Cathos. That is an indisputable truth.

Mascarille. 'Tis a little dirty; but then one has so many convenient chairs.

Magdalen. True; and a chair, I think, is a most sovereign protection against the insults of dirt and bad weather.

Mascarille. I presume you have abundance of visitors, ladies: What wits have you of your party?

Magdalen. Why really, my lord, we are scarcely known as yet, but I hope we shall be soon. A lady of our acquaintance has promised to bring several gentlemen, who write in the reviews, to visit us.

Cathos. And they, you know, are the sovereign arbitrators of all good things.

Mascarille. I will do your business better than any body; they all visit me, and I can say that I never rise without half a dozen wits about me.

Magdalen. Good heavens! we shall be obliged to you to the last degree if you will do us that kindness; for, in short, one must have the acquaintance of all these gentlemen, if one would be of the *beau monde*. It is these that influence repu-

tation at Paris; and in such a manner, you know, that only to keep them company is enough to occasion the report of one's being a critic, though there should be no other reason for it. But what I consider principally in such a connexion is, that by means of these ingenious visits, one is taught an hundred things which there is a necessity of knowing, and which are the quintessence of fine wit. One learns by it every day the little new galantries, the pretty correspondencies in prose or verse. One knows for certain, that such a person has composed the finest piece in the world upon such a subject; such a lady has made words to such a tune; this person has formed a madrigal upon enjoyment; that has composed stanzas on infidelity; Mr. Such-a-one wrote an ode of six lines yesterday evening to Mrs. Such-a-one, to which she sent him an answer this morning at eight o'clock; such an author engaged in such a subject; this writer is about the third part of his romance; that other is putting his works into the press.—In a word, this is what constitutes one a person fit to appear in the world.

Cathos. In short, I think it is excessively ridiculous, for a person to pretend to wit and not know even the least stanza that is made every day; and, for my part, I should be ashamed to shew my face, if any one should ask my opinion of a new piece, and I have not seen it.

Mascarille. It is a shame, indeed, not to have the first of whatever is composed; but do not be uneasy, I will establish an academy of wits at your house, and give you my word, not a rhyme shall be made at Paris, which you shall not have by heart before any body else.—As for myself, such as you see me, I amuse myself in that way sometimes;

and you may see things of mine in all the witty female assemblies at Paris. Let me see;—aye, I have composed above two hundred songs, as many sonnets, four hundred epigrams, and more than a thousand madrigals, without reckoning riddles and lampoons.

Magdalen. I must acknowledge that I am furiously for lampoons; I think nothing is so gallant.

Mascarille. They are so, but they are very difficult to hit off, and call for a prodigious fund of wit; you shall see some of mine, that perhaps may not displease you.

Cathos. For my part, I am terribly fond of riddles.

Mascarille. They exercise the wit, and I have made four of them already this morning, which I will give you to guess the meaning of.

Magdalen. Madrigals are agreeable, when they are well turned.

Mascarille. That is my particular talent. Have you heard, ladies, that I am turning the whole Roman history into madrigals?

Magdalen. Ah! certainly, that must be incomparably fine; I bespeak one book at least, if you print it.

Mascarille. I promise each of you one, bound in the best manner. It was below my quality; but I do it only for the benefit of the bookfellers, who are perpetually teasing me.

Magdalen. I fancy it is a great pleasure to see one's self in print.

Mascarille. Without doubt; but a-propos, I must tell you an extempore that I made yesterday at a duchess's, a friend of mine, whom I was visiting; for I am immoderately fond of an extempore.

Cathos. An extempore is certainly the touchstone of wit.

Mascarille. Will you honour me with your attention?

Magdalen. We do, with all our ears.

Mascarille.

Oh! oh! quite off my guard was I;

Whilst no harm thinking,

You

I view;

Slily your eyes

My heart surprize;

Stop thief, stop thief, stop thief, I cry.

Cathos. Ah! my stars! how excessively gallant!

Mascarille. All I do is easy and genteel, I have nothing of the pedant in me.

Magdalen. Two thousand leagues removed from any thing of that!

Mascarille. Did you mind this beginning, "oh! oh!" this is extraordinary, "oh! oh!"—like a man that bethinks himself all at once, "oh! oh!"—The surprize, "oh! oh!"

Magdalen. Ay, I think that, "oh! oh!" is inimitable.

Mascarille. And yet at first it seems nothing.

Cathos. Oh! my stars! what is that you say? Nothing! why it is inestimable; inexpressibly fine.

Magdalen. No doubt of it, and I should like better to have made that "oh! oh!" than an epic poem.

Mascarille. Egad, you have a good taste.

Magdalen. Eh! I have not an exceeding bad one.

Mascarille. But do not you admire also, "quite off my guard was I;—quite off my guard was I," I minded nothing of the matter: a natural way of speaking, "quite off my guard was I."—"Whilst no harm thinking;" whilst innocently, without malice, like a poor sheep, "you I view;" that is to say, I amuse myself with considering, with observing, with contemplating you. "Slily your eyes"—What think you of the word "slily"? Is not it well chosen?

Cathos. Extremely so.

Mascarille. "Slily," cunningly, it seems as it were a cat coming to catch a mouse, "slily."

Magdalen. Nothing can be better.

Mascarille. "My heart surprize," snatch it away, force it from me; "Stop thief, stop thief, stop thief, stop thief." Would not you imagine a man were crying out and running after a thief to seize him? "stop thief, stop thief, stop thief, stop thief."

Magdalen. It must be acknowledged that there is an amazing deal of wit and sprightliness in this turn.

Mascarille. I will sing you the tune I have made to it.

Cathos. You have learned music?

Mascarille. I?—not at all.

Cathos. Is it possible?

Mascarille. People of quality know every thing, without ever learning any thing.

Magdalen. His lordship is quite in the right, my dear.

Mascarille. Hear if the tune be to your taste: hem, hem, la, la, la, la, la. The brutality of

the season has furiously injured the delicacy of my voice:—but no matter, it is quite ungenteel to sing well. [He sings.] “Oh! oh! quite off my guard was I.”—

Cathos. How tender and fine is the music! every one who have heard it, must certainly have expired.

Magdalen. It is something in the chromatic taste.

Mascarille. Do not you find the thought well expressed in the tune, “stop thief, stop thief?” And then as if a body cried out violently, “stop, stop, stop, stop, stop thief.” Then all at once like a person out of breath,—“stop thief.”

Magdalen. This it is to know the essence of things, the grand nicety, the nicety of niceties. I declare it is altogether an incomparable performance; I am quite enchanted with both air and words.

Cathos. I never yet met with any thing so strong as this.

Mascarille. All I do comes naturally to me, it is without study.

Magdalen. You are the darling of nature, I must say that for you.

Mascarille. Well, ladies, how is your time engaged?

Cathos. We have nothing to do.

Magdalen. We have been here under a hideous abstinence from diversions.

Mascarille. Will you permit me to wait on you to the play? a new comedy is to make its appearance to-night, and I should be extremely happy to attend you to the first representation.

Magdalen. There is no refusing you any thing.

Mascarille. But I beseech you to applaud it well, when we shall be at it; for I am engaged to cry

up the performance; the author visited me this morning to beg me so to do.—It is the custom here for authors to come and read their new performances to us persons of quality, in order to engage us to approve of them, and give them a reputation; and I leave you to imagine, whether, when we say any thing, the pit dares contradict us.—For my part, I am, to the last degree, punctual in those things, and when I have made a promise to the poet, I am always sure to clap, and cry, bravo! before the candles are lighted.

Magdalen. Say no more of it, Paris is a wonderful place; an hundred things happen in it every day, which one knows not in the country, however witty one may be.

Cathos. It is enough; now we are told, we will do our part in crying out as we ought at every word that is said.

Mascarille. I cannot tell whether or not I am deceived; but methinks, by your looks, ladies, you should have written at least one play a-piece.

Magdalen. Eh! there may be something in what you say.

Mascarille. Ah! faith, we must see it.—Between ourselves, I have composed one which I will have acted.

Cathos. Ay! which company of actors will you give it to?

Mascarille. A fine question truly!—to the actors of the theatre-royal;—none but they are capable of gaining things a reputation; the rest know nothing, but speak their parts just as one talks: they do not understand to make the verses roar, or pause at a beautiful passage; how can it be known

where the fine lines are, if the actor does not stop at them, and apprize you thereby to clap?

Cathos. Really, there is a way of making an audience sensible of the beauties of a performance, and things are well esteemed but according as they are well set off.

Mascarille. How do you like this embroidery? is it well adapted to the cloaths?

Cathos. Perfectly.

Mascarille. The ribbon is well chosen.

Magdalen. Furiously well. It is an excellent plum colour.

Mascarille. What say you of my rollers?

Magdalen. They have an excellent air.

Mascarille. I may boast, however, that they are a quarter of a yard wider than any that have been made.

Magdalen. I must confess I never saw the elegance of dress carried to such a height.

Mascarille. These gloves too! tolerably well scented, ha? please to honour them with the reflexion of your smelling faculties.

Magdalen. They smell terribly fine.

Cathos. I never breathed an odour more agreeable.

Mascarille. And this here. [He gives them his powdered wig to smell too.]

Magdalen. It has the true quality odour; the sublime is most admirably blended with the soft.

Mascarille. You say nothing of my feathers; how do you like them?

Cathos. They are extravagantly handsome.

Mascarille. It cost me near ten guineas. It is my passion, you must know, to have all things a-la-mode, cost what they will.

Magdalen. You and I sympathize, I assure you; I am immoderately nice with regard to every thing I wear; and even to my very socks, I cannot endure any thing which is not made by the best hands.

Mascarille crying out suddenly.] O! o! o! gently, gently;—damme, ladies, this is very ill usage; I have reason to complain of your behaviour: this is not fair.

Cathos. For heaven's sake, what is the matter with you?

Mascarille. What! two at once upon my heart! to attack me thus right and left! Oh! it is against all law of nations! the combat is too unequal, and I must be obliged to call out for aid.

Cathos. It must be owned he says things in a particular manner.

Magdalen. He is a consummate wit.

Cathos. You are more afraid than hurt, and your heart complains before it is wounded.

Mascarille. The devil it does! I am certain I feel it pierced through and through! good God! how it bleeds!

S C E N E X.

CATHOS, MAGDALEN, MASCARILLE,
MAROT.

MAROT.

MADAM, there is one desires to speak with you.

Magdalen. Who is it?

Marot. The viscount Jodelet.

Mascarille. The viscount Jodelet?

Marot. Yes, Sir.

VOL. II.

B

Cathos. Are you acquainted with him?

Mascarille. He is my best friend.

Magdalen. Conduct him in immediately.

Mascarille. It is some time since we have seen one another, and I am overjoyed at this lucky meeting.

Cathos. Here he is.

S C E N E XI.

CATHOS, MAGDALEN, JODELET, MASCARILLE, MAROT, ALMANZOR.

MASCARILLE.

AH, viscount!

Jodelet. [Embracing one another.] Ah, marquis!

Mascarille. How happy am I to see you so unexpectedly!

Jodelet. How delighted am I to see you here!

Mascarille. Prithee, let me embrace thee once more.

Magdalen to Cathos.] We begin to be known, my dearest, see the beau monde find the way to our house.

Mascarille. Ladies, give me leave to present this gentleman to you, as a person worthy the honour of your acquaintance.

Jodelet. Ladies, justice forces me to offer that tribute which is so deservedly due to your merits, and those unparalleled charms call for adoration from every sensible being.

Magdalen. This is to drive your civilities even to the borders of flattery.

Cathos. This day ought to be marked with a red letter in our almanack.

Magdalento Almanzor.] Come, boy, must things be always told you over and over? do not you perceive that a chair is deficient?

Mascarille. Do not wonder to behold the viscount a little pale, he is but just recovered from a fit of illness.

Jodelet. It is the fruit of court attendance, and the fatigue of war.

Mascarille. Let me tell you, ladies, that in the viscount you behold one of the bravest men of the age;—he is a perfect hero.

Jodelet. Nay, marquis, you are not second to any man in that respect; every one knows you have done something.

Mascarille. It is true, we have seen one another upon occasion.

Jodelet. And in places where it was very warm.

Mascarille looking at Cathos and Magdalen.]
Ay, but not so warm as it is here. Ha! ha! ha!

Jodelet. Our acquaintance began in the army, and the first time we saw each other, he commanded a regiment of horse aboard the galleys of Malta.

Mascarille. True, but you was in service before me, and I remember I was only a cadet when you headed a company.

Jodelet. War is a fine thing; but, faith, the court now-a-days rewards people that are of service like us very ill.

Mascarille. And therefore my sword shall rest in its scabbard.

Cathos. For my part, I have a furious tenderness for men of the sword.

Magdalen. I love them too: but I would have wit to temper bravery.

Mascarille. Do you remember, viscount, our storming the half-moon at the siege of Arras?

Jodelet. What do ye mean by an half-moon? it was a whole moon, indeed.

Mascarille. I believe you are right.

Jodelet. I ought, faith, to remember it very well; I was wounded in the right leg by a hand-grenade, of which I still carry the mark. Pray feel, ladies, what a cavity is here.

Cathos putting her hand to the place.] The scar is large indeed.

Mascarille. Your hand, if you please, madam. What do you think of this scar in the back part of my head? Do you feel it?

Magdalen. Ay, I feel something very hard.

Mascarille. It is a musket-shot which I received the last campaign I made.

Jodelet opening his bosom.] Here is a wound which went quite through me at the attack of Gravelin.

Mascarille putting his hand upon the button of his breeches.] I am going to shew you a terrible wound.

Magdalen. There is no occasion for it, we believe you without feeling it.

Mascarille. They are honourable marks, that shew what a man is made of.

Cathos. We do not in the least doubt the valour of either.

Mascarille. Viscount, have you your coach in waiting?

Jodelet. Why?

Mascarille. We will give the ladies an airing, and carry them to the jelly-shop.

Magdalen. We cannot go abroad to-day.

Mascarille. Let us have music then and dance.

Jodelet. Faith, that is well thought of.

Magdalen. With all our hearts. But we shall want more company.

Mascarille. Who is there?—Champagne, Picard, Bourgoignon, Casquarat, Basque, la Verduze, Lorrain, Provençal, Violette.—What is become of all my fellows?—I do not think there is a gentleman in France worse served than I. These rascals are always out of the way.

Magdalen. Almanzor, tell the servants of my lord marquis to go look for music, and run with our compliments to some of the neighbours, and tell them to people the desert of our ball with their presence. [Exit Almanzor.

Mascarille. Viscount, what say you of these eyes?

Jodelet. Why, marquis, what do you think of them yourself?

Mascarille. I? I say, that our liberty is furiously in danger; at least mine has suffered most violent attacks; and my heart hangs by a single thread.

Magdalen. How natural is all he says! he has such a pleasing manner of turning things!

Cathos. Really, he is most superabundantly lavish with his wit.

Mascarille. To shew you I am in earnest, I will make an extempore upon it. [He muses.

Cathos. O! I conjure you by all my soul holds sacred, let us have something made upon us.

Jodelet. I should be glad to do as much for you;

but the prodigious loss of blood I have sustained, has greatly exhausted my poetic vein.

Mascarille. Deuce take it! I always make the first verse well, but I am perplexed about the rest. Faith, this is a little too hasty, I will make you an extempore at my leisure, which you will find to be the finest in the world.

Jodelet. How devilish witty he is!

Magdalen. His wit is gallant and finely turned.

Mascarille. Viscount, when did you see the countess?

Jodelet. It is above three weeks since I visited her.

Mascarille. Do you know that the duke came to see me this morning, and would have taken me into the country a stag-hunting with him?

Magdalen. Here come our friends.

SCENE XII.

LUCILIA, CELIMENA, CATHOS, MAGDALEN, MASCARILLE, JODELET, MAROT, ALMANZOR, and FIDLERs.

MAGDALEN.

LARD! my dears! we beg your pardon for the freedom we have taken in sending for you in so abrupt a manner; but these gentlemen having proposed to give us a dance, we sent for you to fill up the vacuum of our assembly.

Lucilia. You have obliged us certainly.

Mascarille. This is a kind of extempore ball; but one of these days we will give you one in form. Is the music come?

Almanzor. Yes, Sir, they are here.

Cathos. Come then, my dears, take your places.

Mascarille dancing alone by way of prelude.]

Tol lol derol derol loi.

Magdalen. How excellent a shape!

Cathos. Certainly he must dance nobly.

Mascarille, having taken out Magdalen to dance.]

Faith, ladies, I believe my freedom will presently keep time with my feet. Play in time, fiddlers, in time. O what ignorant wretches! there is no dancing with them. The devil take ye, cannot ye play in measure? Tol lol derol derol lol. Silence, ye country scrappers!

Jodelet, dancing afterwards.] Hold, do not play so fast, I am but just recovered of a fit of sickness.

S C E N E XIII.

DU CROISY, LA GRANGE, CATHOS, MAGDALEN, LUCILIA, CELIMENA, JODELET, MASCARILLE, MAROT, and FIDDLERS.

LA GRANGE, with a stick in his hand.

SO, scoundrels! what do you here? we have been seeking you these three hours.

Mascarille, feeling himself beaten] O! o! o! you did not tell me the blows should be thus.

Jodelet. O! o! o!

La Grange. What! you set up for persons of quality, do you?

Du Croisy. This will teach you to know yourselves.

S C E N E XIV.

CATHOS, MAGDALEN, LUCILIA, CELIMENA, MASCARILLE, JODELET, MAROT and FIDLERs.

MAGDALEN.

PRAY, gentlemen, what is the meaning of this?

Jodelet. It is a joke, a wager.

Cathos. What, let yourselves be beaten in this manner!

Mascarille. Lard, I would not be seen to take any notice of it; because I am violent, and should have been guilty of some extravagance.

Magdalen. To suffer an affront like this in our presence!

Mascarille. It is nothing, I tell you.—Come, let us proceed. We have known one another a long time. They are two comical dogs. Why, if friends were to quarrel for a frolic, there would be no living.

S C E N E XV.

DU CROISY, LA GRANGE, MAGDALEN, CATHOS, LUCILIA, CELIMENA, MASCARILLE, JODELET, MAROT, and FIDLERs.

LA GRANGE.

WE will let you know, rascals, what it is to make a jest of us.

[Three or four bullies enter.]

Magdalen. What means this impudence, to come and disturb us thus in our own house?

Du Croisy. What, madam, do you think we can tamely look on, and see our footmen better received by our mistresses than ourselves? and have the impudence to give them a ball at our expence?

Magdalen. Your footmen?

La Grange. Ay, our footmen; it is neither decent nor honest to encourage other people's servants to such insolence and extravagance.

Magdalen. O heavens! what impudence!

La Grange. But they shall not have the advantage of our clothes to dazzle your eyes; if you will love them, it shall be, faith, for their handsome looks. Quick, strip immediately.

Jodelet. Farewel finery.

Mascarille. The marquise and viscountship are at an end.

Du Croisy. You impudent rascals! how dared you to set up for the rivals of your masters?

La Grange. It is too much to supplant us in our own cloaths.

Mascarille. O fortune! how fickle thou art!

Du Croisy. Quick, take every thing away from them.

La Grange. Carry away these clothes, begone with them. Now, ladies, you are extremely welcome to your new gallants in their present condition. As for this gentleman and myself, we promise you we shall not be jealous; and so leave you to finish your dance.

S C E N E XVI.

MAGDALEN, CATHOS, JODELET,
MASCARILLE, and FIDLERS.

CATHOS.

AH! what confusion!
Magdalen. I burst with vexation.

1. Fidler to Mascarille.] What! the meaning
of this? who is to pay us?

Mascarille. Ask the viscount.

1. Fidler to Jodelet.] Who is to give us the
money?

Jodelet. Ask the marquis.

S C E N E XVII.

GORGIBUS, MAGDALEN, CATHOS,
JODELET, MASCARILLE, and
FIDLERS.

GORGIBUS.

WELL, flirts! you have made fine laugh-
ing-stocks of yourselves. The gentle-
men have told me a curious trick of you.

Magdalen. Ah, father! we have been cruelly
used.

Gorgibus. A trick with a vengeance! you may
thank your own insolence for it, you jades! I think
your lovers have punished you very properly for
your treatment this morning—And here I must be
laughed at for your folly and impertinence.

Magdalen. Ah! I swear we will be revenged,
or I shall die with the vexation of it. And you,

rascals, dare you continue here after your infolence?

Mascarille. Do you use a marquis thus? This is the way of the world, the least disgrace makes us beslighted by those that before careffed us. Come, let us go and seek our fortune elsewhere: I see nothing but outside takes with this world; and now-a-days naked virtue goes unrewarded.

SCENE THE LAST.

GORGIBUS, MAGDALEN, CATHOS,
and FIDLERS.

I. FIDLER.

SIR, we expect that you should pay us, since they do not, for it was here we played.

Gorgibus beating them.] Ay, ay, villains, I will pay you! but it shall be in this coin. And as for you, ye gipsies, I know not what prevents me from using you in the same manner. You have made both yourselves and me the jest of the town. Begone out of my sight for ever! [They go out.] And as for romances, verses, songs, sonnets, and sonatas, which have been the occasion of all this, may the devil fly away with them all.

THE END.

I

J

DON GARCIA

OF

NAVARRÉ:

OR, THE

JEALOUS PRINCE.

AN HEROIC COMEDY.



Don

P

a

F

T

ble

gin

the

bett

Gar

the

the

tho

par

fce

the

ci



DON GARCIA of NAVARRE, *or the JEALOUS PRINCE, an Heroic Comedy of five Acts, acted at Paris, at the Theatre of the Palace-Royal, February 4th, 1661.*

THE choice of the subject, in imitation of the Spanish, in which the incidents are more suitable to comedy, than to any thing heroic; the original of which is vicious, and might be a means of the small success of this work. Moliere succeeded no better as an actor, when he played the part of Don Garcia. He did not appeal from the judgment of the publick, nor did he print his piece, though there were some passages in it, which he afterwards thought deserved to be inserted in other comedies, particularly in the MAN-HATER; see the third scene of the fourth act of the MAN-HATER, and the eighth scene of the fourth act of DON GARCIA.

A C T O R S.

DON GARCIA, Prince of Navarre, in love with Elvira.

ELVIRA, Princess of Leon.

DON ALPHONSO, Prince of Leon, thought to be the prince of Castile, under the name of Don Silvio.

AGNESA, a countess, in love with Silvio, beloved by Moorgat, the usurper of the state of Leon.

ELIZA, confident to Elvira.

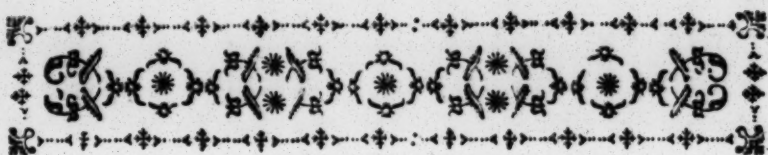
DON ALVAREZ, confident of Garcia, in love with Eliza.

DON LOPEZ, another confident of Don Garcia, in love with Eliza.

DON PEDRO, gentleman-usher to Agnesa.

A PAGE to Elvira.

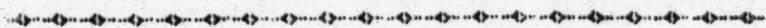
SCENE lies in Astorga, a city of Spain, in the kingdom of Leon.



DON GARCIA

OF


NAVARRÉ.



ACT I. SCENE I.

ELVIRA, ELIZA.

ELVIRA.

 N short, I have no choice to determine the sentiments of my mind concerning these two lovers; I can find nothing in the prince to induce me to prefer his love. Don Silvio possesses all the good qualities of a glorious hero as well as him. The equal birth of both, added to their noble virtues, often induces me to speak in both their favours: and if merit alone were to plead a right to my heart, the conqueror would be yet unnamed—But heaven intends it otherwise, and weighs down the scale in Don Garcia's favour.

Eliza. Indeed, madam, as you have been so long in determining between the two rivals, I am afraid the love your stars have inspired you with for him, has but a small possession of your soul.

Elvira. The love of these worthy rivals has gi-

ven me very great uneasiness. When I looked on the one, I found no reason to restrain my tender regard for him: but when the sacrifice of the other presented itself to me, I chid the former movement of my soul as an act of injustice, and thought Don Silvio deserving of a happier fate: I considered the obligations which the late king Leon's daughter was under to the blood of Castile, and the strong friendship which had long united the interests of his father and mine; and as the one gained my affection, the bad success of the other gave me pain. When his melting sighs demanded my pity, his desires were amused with a favourable appearance, with which small advantage he was willing to make amends for the secret difficulties he met with in my heart.

Eliza. You should make yourself easy, since you have been made acquainted with his first passion. Donna Agnesa received the homage of his heart before he felt a passion for you; and as she is your intimate friend, and has intrusted you with the secret, you have a good opportunity of freeing yourself, and may refuse him under a pretence of friendship for her.

Elvira. Really the account of Don Silvio's infidelity may give me pleasure, as it gives my weak heart liberty to determine against him, and I may with propriety refuse his offers, and bestow the feelings of my heart on another. But if the severity of another sort of constraint still gives me pain, this satisfaction will not equal my uneasiness, when the continual weakness of a jealous prince unworthily receives my tender regards, and will certainly make me be obliged to drop all correspondence with him.

Eliza
piness
from y
that w
suspect

Elvi
gance
ly by
es. A
other
or ever
ments
and ev
will no
I have
equal
upon t
againf
betwe
inclin
policy
other
flow f
did m
the in
prince
he sh

El
ons o
a wel
fy wo
son w
in an
joy.

aer, a

Eliza. Can you blame him not to believe his happiness compleat, when he is not yet assured of it from your own mouth? And is it not natural for that which gives hopes to his rival to make him suspect your tenderness for him?

Elvira. No, there is no excuse for the extravagance of his jealousy; and he must see too plainly by my actions, that he has my secret good wishes. A person's thoughts may be interpreted by other ways than speaking. A look, a blush, a sigh, or even silence, is sufficient to discover the sentiments of one's heart. Every thing in love speaks, and every ray is a sun; as the delicacy of our sex will not allow us to discover what we feel, I own I have endeavoured to divide my favours with an equal hand between them, and to look impartially upon the merits of both; but it is in vain to strive against our wishes, and it is very easy to discern between favours which proceed from the sincere inclination of the heart, and those bestowed out of policy. The one always appears forced, but the other natural; like pure and limpid streams which flow from their native sources calmly. In vain did my pity towards Don Silvio strive to move me; the insufficiency of it discovered itself, whilst the prince must observe in my eye, more than I chose he should.

Eliza. If there is no foundation for the suspicions of that illustrious lover, they are the signs of a well affected soul; and what makes you uneasy would give others pleasure. Jealousy in a person who is disagreeable to us, may give pain; but in an agreeable object who loves us, it should give joy. He only expresses his passion in that manner, and the more his jealousy appears, it should

increase our love. Therefore since in your soul a brave prince——

Elvira. Ah! do not advance such a strange maxim; at all times and on all occasions, Jealousy is odious; nothing can soften its hurtful attacks, and we feel the affront more sensibly the dearer the object. To see a passionate prince laying aside that respect with which love inspires him, and in his jealousies chiding my pleasures and disgusts, construing every thing I do or say in favour of a rival! No, no, these suspicious tempers are too offensive; I will give you my opinion without deceit. I confess I love Don Garcia, and his bravery in the midst of Leon has given me a proof of his flame, by defying the greatest dangers, delivering me from the designs of wicked tyrants, and securing me from the horrors of an unworthy match. I own, I would not wish to owe my deliverance to any other person. Indeed, Eliza, it gives great pleasure to an enamoured heart to be under obligations to what it loves; and its fearful flame gains more strength, and shines out stronger, when it imagines it satisfies its obligations by the means of favours. Yes, I am pleased that his venturing his life for me appears to give his love a right of conquest: it gives me pleasure that my danger put me under his protection; and if reports are true, and my brother return, my sincere wishes are, that he may assist my brother in the recovery of his throne, and that he may by lucky successes of a noble valour deserve all manner of thanks from me. Yet if his jealousy does not cease, and he do not subject himself to my laws, but continue to incite my anger, he will hope for the possession of Donna Elvira in vain. I hate the appearance of certain

mifery
join us.

Eliza
will con
have ex
reads is

Elvi
it, I wi
ter to i
to favo
too cle

Eliz
but I
diverfi
upon a
For m
ver;
appoi

El
was f

I
he c
I
whe
ter
Lou
by
the

misery to both, and in that case Hymen can never join us.

Eliza. Madam, he is a prince that I dare say will conform himself to your desires, which you have explained so well in this letter, that when he reads it——

Elvira. Now, when I have thought better upon it, I will not have it delivered, Eliza; it will be better to inform him of my thoughts by word of mouth; to favour a lover with writing, leaves in his hands too clear proofs of our inclination.

Eliza. I should make a law of your inclination, but I am surprized that heaven should throw such diversity into people's minds. What some look upon as an hardship, others desire as a happiness. For my part, I should be glad to have a jealous lover; his misery would be joy to me, and what disappoints me is to see Don Alvarez so easy.

Elvira. Here he comes; we did not think he was so near.

SCENE II.

ELVIRA, DON ALVAREZ, ELIZA.

ELVIRA.

I Am amazed at your sudden return: are we to expect Don Alphonso? what is the news? is he coming?

D. Alvarez. Madam, the time is now come, when that brother brought up in Castile will enter into the possession of his own again. Don Louis, to whose care his infancy was committed by the late king, has concealed his quality from the whole state, to save him from the rage of that

traitor Meorgat; and notwithstanding the tyrant has often made enquiry for him, under the pretence of giving up his place to him, yet he would never trust the dangerous bait of his sham-justice. But as the people are enraged at that violence which would have been offered to you by an unjust power, that generous old man thought it high time to try the success of twenty years expectation. He has founded Leon, and his faithful agents have practised upon the minds of both great and small. When Castile was preparing ten thousand men to restore that prince to the wishes of his people, he spreads his fame abroad, and shews him only at the head of an army, ready to launch the avenging thunder on the base usurper's head. Leon is besieged and Don Silvio commands in person the succour you have from his father.

Elvira. A succour so powerful may readily flatter our hopes; but I am afraid my brother will be under too great obligations to him.

D. Alvarez. Is it not surprizing, madam, that, notwithstanding the storm that threatens the usurper, all reports from Leon confirm, that he is going to marry the countess Agnesa?

Elvira. I have heard nothing from that illustrious maid lately, which makes me uneasy; she always detested that tyrant. He endeavours to strengthen his interest by an alliance with her.

Eliza. She is under other engagements of honour and affection, too powerful to—

D. Alvarez. The prince is coming.

D. G. A

Mbrother
death,
offers
to ne
kind
dead
forme
sure
ther
with
I on
hear
for
ed y
my
and
you
ed
my
am
ful
a v

are
th
di

S C E N E III.

D. GARCIA, DONNA ELVIRA, D. AL-
VAREZ, ELIZA.

D. GARCIA.

MADAM, I am come to rejoice with you at the good news you have received. That brother who threatens the infamous tyrant with death, at the same time gives hopes to my love, and offers me a welcome occasion of exposing myself to new dangers for your sake. If heaven proves kind to me, this right hand shall lay the infidel dead at your feet, and restore your family to its former grandeur. And what gives me more pleasure still, is, that the stars have restored your brother to the throne; for so my love may shine out, without imputation, as if by means of your person, I only fought to gain myself a crown. Yes, my heart would shew the world that my regards were for you alone; and I have a thousand times wished you in a humble station, that the sacrifice of my heart might repair heaven's injustice to you; and that you might be indebted to my love for all you owe to your birth. But as heaven has deprived me of that satisfaction, be so obliging as to let my love have some hope from his death whom I am preparing to meet, and allow me by my faithful services to dispose the minds of a brother, and a whole nation to be favourable to me.

Elvira. The favour of a brother, and of a nation are not enough to crown your hopes: I am sensible, that by espousing our cause, you can make an hundred glorious exploits speak in favour of your love.

Elvira is not the prize of that attempt, there is still a greater difficulty to surmount.

D. Garcia. I know what you mean, madam, and am sensible that my heart sighs in vain for you; and am not unacquainted with the mighty difficulty, though you do not mention it.

Elvira. People often take ill what is well meant. We may be led into mistakes by too much heat: but since I must, I will speak. Shall I tell you when you may expect to please me, and when you may have some hope?

D. Garcia. I would look upon that, madam, as a very great favour.

Elvira. When you know how to love as you ought.

D. Garcia. Alas, madam, can any thing equal the passion you have inspired me with?

Elvira. When your passion does not displease me.

D. Garcia. That is my only study.

Elvira. When you shall cease to entertain unworthy thoughts of me.

D. Garcia. I love you to madness.

Elvira. When you have made amends for your offences, and laid aside that jealous humour which hurts the addresses you offer to me, and prejudices me against them with just anger.

D. Garcia. Indeed, madam, still some remains of jealousy cleave to my heart, in spite of my best endeavours to prevent it; a rival, though at some distance from your charming person, does disturb me. Whether through reason or fancy, I always imagine you are unhappy in his absence, and that, notwithstanding my assiduous behaviour to please you, you continually sigh for that too happy man.

But if you are displeased at my suspicions, it is in your power to ease me of them: Yes, you can drive jealousy from my mind, and dissipate all the horrors with which that monster fills my soul. Submit therefore to resolve the doubt that afflicts me, and with a kind confession from your charming mouth, make me certain of what my greatest diligence could not find out.

Elvira. The tyranny of your suspicions is very great, prince. A heart should be understood at the least intimation, and does not love the importunity of those flames which require such particular explanations. The first movement which our souls discover should satisfy a discreet lover. Were I to chuse for myself, I do not know in whose favour I should determine, whether your's or Don Silvio's: but the very desiring to constrain you not to be jealous, might have given some information to any one but you; I thought that rule might have given light enough, without saying more; but your love is not satisfied, and requires an open declaration: I must say plainly, I love you, nay, perhaps swear to it.

D. Garcia. Indeed, madam, I confess I am too forward: I should be satisfied with what you please, and require no other information: I flatter myself you have some small compassion for me, and that I am happier than I deserve. My jealous suspicions are all over; my sentence is very agreeable, and I receive the law thereby prescribed to set my heart free from this unjust empire.

Elvira. You promise a great deal, prince, and I very much doubt whether you can put that force upon yourself.

D. Garcia. Ah! madam, to render me credible,
VOL. II. C

it is enough that what is promised to you ought to be inviolable; because the happiness of obeying you renders every thing easy. May heaven declare eternal war against me, may it lay me breathless at your feet, or which is worse, may your wrath be poured on me, if ever my love descends to such weakness as to fail in the duties of that promise; if ever the least jealous transport in my soul—

SCENE IV.

ELVIRA, D. GARCIA, D. ALVAREZ, ELIZA.
[Footman presenting a letter to Elvira.]

ELVIRA.

I WAS uneasy, and you greatly oblige me: let the messenger stay.

SCENE V.

ELVIRA, D. GARCIA, D. ALVAREZ, ELIZA.

ELVIRA low and aside.

I Plainly see by his looks how much this letter disturbs him. Prodigious effect of his jealous mind! Prince, what stops you in the middle of your oath? [Aloud.

D. Garcia. I was afraid of interrupting you, as I thought you might have some secret together.

Elvira. I think the tone of your voice is much changed, and your eyes look wild; I am amazed at this sudden alteration; pray tell me from what it proceeds.

D. Garcia. I am sick at heart suddenly.

Elvira. Are you often thus affected? Some imme-

mediate remedy is needful; those illnesses are very frequent.

D. Garcia. Sometimes.

Elvira. Alas, frail prince! here let this writing cure your distemper, it is no where but in the mind.

D. Garcia. That writing, madam! no, my hand refuses it: I know your thoughts, and what you accuse me of, if—

Elvira. Read it, I tell you, and satisfy yourself.

D. Garcia. That you may afterwards call me weak, jealous; no, no, I will convince you that this letter has not in the least disturbed me, and to justify myself, I will not read it, though you are pleased to allow me.

Elvira. If you persist in your refusal, I should be in the wrong to force you; it is sufficient I let you see whose hand it is.

D. Garcia. My will ought always to submit to yours; if it is your pleasure I should read it for you, I shall do it very willingly.

Elvira. Yes, yes, prince, take it; you shall read it for me.

D. Garcia. To obey you, madam; and I may say——

Elvira. What you please; pray dispatch.

D. Garcia. It comes from Donna Agnesa, I perceive.

Elvira. It does so; and I am glad of it, as well for your sake as my own.

D. Garcia reads.] “Notwithstanding all contempt, the tyrant persists in his love to me; and
“more effectually to compass his ends, has, since
“your absence, turned on me all that violence
“with which he pursued the match between your-

“ self and his son. Those who can claim any power over me do all approve this unworthy proposal, being inspired by the villainous motives of false honour. I do not know as yet where my persecution will end. But I will die sooner than consent. May you, fair Elvira enjoy a happier fate.”

D. AGNESA.

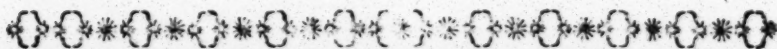
Her soul is endued with a surprising virtue.

Elvira. I will go and write an answer to this illustrious friend. In the mean time, prince, learn to arm yourself better against such accidents. I have calmed your tempest this time, and the thing has past mildly off: but, perhaps, I may not be in a humour to do so again.

D. Garcia. What? you think then——

Elvira. I think what I ought: farewell, do not forget my advice; and if your love of me be really so great as you pretend, let me see such proofs of it as I expect.

D. Garcia. Be assured, that I intend nothing more than to obey you; and I would sooner die than fail in it.



ACT II. SCENE I.

ELIZA, D. LOPEZ.

ELIZA.

TO be plain with you, I am not surprized at what the prince does; as a soul fired with a noble passion cannot avoid being transported with jealousy sometimes; it is very natural that its wish-

es be often crossed by doubts, and I must think well of it; but what I am amazed at, Don Lopez, is to be acquainted that you prepare suspicions for him, that you contrive them, and he is only jealous with your eyes, and disturbed by your cares. Really I must tell you again, that I am not surprized at the anxieties and suspicions of a sincere lover, but to see a person who is not in love have all the jealousies of a real admirer, is a very particular case, which belongs only to you.

D. Lopez. Let every body talk upon that subject as they please: every man must rule his conduct by what he proposes to himself; and as you reject my love, I must endeavour to make my best court to the prince.

Eliza. But if you still encourage this temper in him, he will make his court very ill.

Don Lopez. My charming Eliza, was it ever known that people about great men ever studied any thing but their own interest? Was there ever a compleat courtier increased his prince's retinue by censuring the faults he saw in them, or give himself concern for their real interest, in case he could enlarge his fortune by them? All such people aim at is to get the easiest way to their favour, which they may easily do by flattering their infirmities, and blindly commending what they chuse to do, and never encouraging any thing that may give them offence; that is the whole secret of getting into their favour. If a man give them good advice he is looked upon as a troublesome fellow, and will be thrown out of that confidence which he got into by an artful compliance. Really, we see that the art of courtiers is to make their advan-

tage of the follies of the great, not to reprove, but encourage them in their errors.

Eliza. For a time those maxims may answer, but there are such things as reverses of fortune. If the mistaken great ones see into their error, they will be revenged on all such fawners for the injury done their honour; and I must tell you, that you are too free in explaining your politics. If a just account of your reasons were laid before the prince, I am afraid your fortune would not be made by it.

D. Lopez. I know very well Eliza's discretion will prevent her from making this conversation public; and I can deny all I have said: besides, every body knows what I have said to be true, and why should I keep my proceedings private? When we make use of tricking or treason, we may be afraid of a fall; but I can be accused of nothing but a little complaisance, and need fear nothing. I only follow the prince's inclination to jealousy: his soul is fed by suspicions, and I study to find occasions to give him uneasiness, and look sharp out on all sides for matter to make up our private conversation. And when I have it in my power to disturb his quiet by a piece of news, then he regards me most, and I can observe him swallow the poison eagerly, and be as thankful for it as for the account of a victory, that crowned him with honour and happiness. But I see my rival coming, and I will leave you together; and notwithstanding I give up all hopes of ever possessing you, yet your giving him the preference, in my presence, would give me pain; therefore I will avoid that mortification as much as I possibly can.

Eliza. All sensible lovers will do the same.

SCENE II.

D. ALVAREZ, ELIZA.

D. ALVAREZ.

WE are at last informed that the king of Navarre has declared himself this day in favour of the prince's love, and that a fresh reinforcement of troops is ready to be employed in the service of her to whom he wishes to aspire. I am surprized at the quick advances they have made. But—

SCENE III.

D. GARCIA, ELIZA, D. ALVAREZ.

D. GARCIA.

WHAT is the princess doing?

Eliza. I suppose she is writing letters, my lord; but I will acquaint her that you are here.

D. Garcia. I will wait till she is at liberty.

SCENE IV.

D. GARCIA alone.

WHEN the prospect of seeing her is so near, I feel my mind uncommonly disturbed; resentment and fear makes me tremble all over. Take care, D. Garcia, that a blind caprice do not lead thee to some precipice, and the strong disorders of thy mind betray thee into too assured a belief of thy senses. Take thy reason for thy guide, and observe whether the appearance of thy suspicions are

well grounded; do not refuse their voice, but take care they do not impose upon thee to put too much confidence in them, that they may not give too much into thy first transports: read again sedately this half letter. Ha! I would give any thing for the other half! But this is more than sufficient to shew me that I am unfortunate.

If your rival—
you should however—
and you may destroy—
the greatest obstacle—
I gratefully remember—
in delivering me from—
his love, his devoirs—
but he is despicable to me with—
purge therefore your flame from—
merit the regards that are—
and when you are promised—
do not absolutely refuse—

Yes, in these characters, my fate is very plain; by this she shews her heart as well as hand; and the imperfect meanings of these fatal words do not require the other half to discover it. We must at first, however, carry it fair, and not discover our resentment to the faithless woman: we will puzzle her with the same arts she uses. I see her approaching; reason, contain my transports, and guard my outward appearance for a short time.

SCENE V.

ELVIRA, D. GARCIA.

ELVIRA.

FORGIVE me for detaining you.

D. Garcia low and aside.] How easily she can dissemble!

Elvira. We have been informed just now, that the king your father approves of your intentions, and has consented that his son should restore us to our subjects. It gives me great pleasure.

D. Garcia. Yes, madam, I am also very glad of it: but—

Elvira. Undoubtedly the tyrant will not easily screen himself from the thunder that threatens him from all parts; and I please myself with hoping that the same bravery with which I was delivered from his brutal fury, and placed safe within the walls of Astorga, will, by the conquest of Leon, finish that horrid monster's severity.

D. Garcia. The success will soon shew it: but I beg we may have some other conversation: may I be so free as to beg to know who you have written to since fate brought us here?

Elvira. From whence does your concern arise? Why do you ask this question?

D. Garcia. Only out of pure curiosity, madam.

Elvira. Curiosity is supposed to be the daughter of jealousy.

D. Garcia. Not the least of what you suppose. Your commands deter me from that vice.

Elvira. Without making further enquiry into the reason for your asking, I have wrote two letters

to the countess of Leon, and to the marquis Don Louis at Burgos two: does this satisfy you?

D. Garcia. To no other person, madam?

Elvira. Really no. I am surprised at this conversation.

D. Garcia. Pray recollect before you deny it. People often perjure themselves by not considering well.

Elvira. In this my mouth cannot be perjured.

D. Garcia. It is guilty of a very great falsehood, however.

Elvira. Prince!

D. Garcia. Madam!

Elvira. Heavens! what means this extravagance! tell me, have you lost your senses?

D. Garcia. Yes, indeed, I lost them, when I had the misfortune to suck in the poison of your love, and when I expected to meet with sincerity in those faithless charms that bewitched me.

Elvira. What treachery do you complain of?

D. Garcia. Ah! deceitful heart! how well she understands the art of feigning! But every door is shut against her; no hole left to creep out at: here, look on this, and confess your own writing. The style of this part of a letter shews plainly who you intended it for.

Elvira. And does this disturb you?

D. Garcia. Do not be ashamed of this writing.

Elvira. It is not usual for innocence to blush.

D. Garcia. Here indeed we see it oppressed, you will deny the letter, because it wants a name.

Elvira. I do not deny it: it is my own hand writing—

D. Garcia. I am amazed you own with it; but I suppose you will say it was wrote to some indif-

ferent person, or that the kind expressions in it were intended for some relation, or female friend.

Elvira. No; I intended it for a lover, and a lover I esteem.

D. Garcia. And may I, perfidious—

Elvira. Unworthy prince, stop the violence of your fury: though I do not need to obey any person here, and am only accountable to myself, yet I will clear myself of the offence you so basely charge me with, to punish you. Do not doubt but you shall be undeceived. I want not a defence to shew my innocence; you shall judge in your own cause, and shall be obliged to pronounce your own sentence.

D. Garcia. This mystery I cannot understand.

Elvira. To your misfortune you shall soon understand it. Eliza, come here.

S C E N E VI.

D. GARCIA, ELVIRA, ELIZA.

MADAM. ELIZA.

Elvira to D. Garcia.] Take good notice whether I use any art to deceive you, whether by any movement of the body, or motion of the eye, I endeavour to ward off this sudden stroke. [To Eliza.] Tell me immediately, where did you leave the letter I wrote just now?

Eliza. I confess I am to blame, madam; I am ignorant how it happened, I left it upon my table, and have just now been told, that Don Lopez, with his usual freedom, came into my room, and observing every thing that was lying about, found

this letter. When he was opening it, Eleonor, endeavouring to catch it from him, before he could read it, it was torn in two pieces, one of which Don Lopez run off with, notwithstanding all her efforts to the contrary.

Elvira. Have you the other half?

Eliza. Yes, madam, here it is.

Elvira. Give it me, [to D. Garcia.] and we will see who is to blame; here, join this to that you have, and read it; I will hear you.

D. Garcia. To the prince Don Garcia. Hah!

Elvira. Read on; are you thunderstruck at the direction?

D. Garcia reads.] "If your rival, prince, alarms you, you should, however, fear yourself more than him, and you may destroy, whenever you please, the greatest obstacle your passion meets with. I gratefully remember what Don Garcia did in delivering me from our haughty ravishers; his love, his devoirs are agreeable to me, but he is despicable to me with his jealousy. Purge, therefore, your flame from that foul blemish; merit the regards that are bestowed upon you; and when you are promised by people to be made happy, do not absolutely refuse to do so yourself."

ELVIRA.

Elvira. Well, what think you of this?

D. Garcia. Ah! madam, I am quite distracted. Too great a punishment cannot be inflicted upon me.

Elvira. Enough; know that I desired the letter should be read to you now, for no other reason but to falsify your assertions, and that I might have an opportunity to unsay all that I find there in your favour. Farewel.

D. Garcia. Whither do you fly, madam?

Elvira. Where you, too jealous man, never shall come.

D. Garcia. Forgive, madam, a wretched lover, who has made himself hated by you, by a wondrous turn of fate, and who, if he had remained quiet and unconcerned, had deserved to be more blamed. For, can a soul, which mixes not fear with its hope, be truly enamoured? And could you believe I had loved you, if I had been unalarmed at this letter? If I had not trembled at the thunderbolt which I fancied had destroyed all my happiness? I leave it to your own judgment; say, would not such an accident have thrown any other lover into my error? Alas! how could I withhold my assent to so clear a proof?

Elvira. Yes, you might have done it: my sentiments so clearly explained to you, might have secured your doubts: you had not the least to be afraid of, and if some others had had such a pledge, they would never have paid the least regard to what people said.

D. Garcia. The less deserving we are of an expected benefit, with more difficulty we depend upon it; a destiny too replete with glory seems slippery, and leaves to our suspicions an easy declivity. As for me, who so little deserve your goodness, I doubted of my happy fortune: I thought that being in a place of my jurisdiction, you forced yourself to be a little complaisant; that disguising to me your severity——

Elvira. And was I capable of condescending to such a mean shift! to make use of shameful fiction! to act upon motives of a shameful fear, to betray my sentiments, and because I was in your

power, to cover my hatred with a mask of favour! Could my heart be so little swayed by glory! can you think so, and dare to tell me it? Know that this heart cannot debase itself; that nothing under heaven can force it to do it: and if, by this odd mistake, you have seen marks of a goodness of which you are not worthy, know, that notwithstanding your power, I can shew the contempt I resolve to have for you, defy your fury, and convince you that I was not guilty of any baseness, nor ever will be so.

D. Garcia. Well, I am guilty, I do not deny it; but I beg pardon of your divine charms, I beg it for the sake of the most lively flame that ever two fair eyes kindled in a mortal's breast. But if your wrath cannot be appeased, if my crime is too great to be forgiven; if you do not look upon the love that caused it, nor the speedy repentance which my heart manifests to you; I must then, by putting a period to my days, free myself from these horrid pains. You must not imagine that I can live a minute under your displeasure; the cruel length of that minute already makes my heart sink under its cutting remorse; the terrible wounds of a thousand vultures are not to be compared to its mortal pangs. Tell me, madam, if I am to expect pardon, else this sword, by a favourable stroke, shall, in your presence, pierce the heart of a wretched man; this treacherous heart, whose anxieties have offended your excessive goodness so much. I shall be too happy in death, if this last stroke cancels in your mind the image of my fault, and leaves no part of your hatred in the weak remembrance of my love: this is the only kindness my affection requires from you.

Elvira. Ah! too cruel prince.

D. Garcia. Say, madam, speak.

Elvira. Should I still be kind to you, and allow myself to be affronted so frequently?

D. Garcia. A mind that is in love can never give an affront, and that love excuses its faults.

Elvira. Love cannot excuse such fury.

D. Garcia. All its ardour arises from its movements, and the stronger it is the more difficulty it finds—

Elvira. Speak to me no more of it; you deserve my hatred.

D. Garcia. Do you hate me then?

Elvira. I will try to do it at least; but I fear my endeavours will be to no purpose, and that all the displeasure your behaviour has excited will not be sufficient to make me carry my revenge far enough.

D. Garcia. Do not try the effects of so heavy a punishment, as I offer you my life for your revenge; pronounce my sentence, and I will obey you immediately.

Elvira. A person who cannot hate, must be ill qualified to kill.

D. Garcia. Determine either to forgive or punish me; I cannot live except your goodness grant a pardon to my rash mistakes.

Elvira. Alas! my resolutions are too plainly seen; I think it is forgiving a criminal, when one tells him they cannot hate him.

D. Garcia. Ah! it is too much. Allow me, adorable princess—

Elvira. Hold, I hate myself for my weakness.

D. Garcia alone.] At last I am—

SCENE VII.

D. GARCIA, D. LOPEZ.

D. LOPEZ.

I AM come to inform you of a secret, that may justly alarm your love.

D. Garcia. Do not, while I am in this charming transport, come to tell me of secrets or alarms; after what I have just heard and seen, I will encourage no suspicions; the unequalled goodness of so dear an object should shut my ears against all vain reports; so let me hear no more of them.

D. Lopez. My lord, your interest is all I consider, so let it be just as you please: I thought what I had discovered should be immediately communicated to you; but as you do not chuse to hear it, I am ready to change the discourse, and tell you, that every family in Leon has already thrown aside the mask, upon the report of the troops of Castile; and especially the populace have shewn such respect to their new king, that it, to all appearance, makes the tyrant tremble for fear.

D. Garcia. However, Castile shall not have the victory without our attempting to share the honour of it; our troops may be able to imprint fear in the mind of Moorgat. But let me hear that secret you have to tell me.

D. Lopez. I have nothing to say, my lord.

D. Garcia. Come, come, I give you free liberty to speak.

D. Lopez. I am too well informed by what you said, my lord, for that, and as my intelligence may

give you uneasiness, I will be silent for the future.

D. Garcia. I am determined to know it, without any more to do.

D. Lopez. I must obey you, my lord; but it would be imprudent to explain it in this public place. Let us go from hence, and you shall know it, and judge of it.



ACT III. SCENE I.

ELVIRA, ELIZA.

ELVIRA.

WHAT do you think of this strange weakness in the heart of a princess, Eliza? to lay aside my resentment so soon, and forgive so base an affront?

Eliza. I am not surprized, madam, at your anger being abated; notwithstanding the provocation you had to be disobliged. I know it is very difficult to put up with an affront from the man we love; but as there is nothing more provoking, so nothing we sooner forgive. If a beloved offender throw himself at our feet, he soon gets the better of our anger, and the more easily, if the offence proceeds from sincere love.

Elvira. But this is the last time I shall blush for my weakness, whatever power love may have over me: and if he ever give me reason again to be angry, he must not expect forgiveness; if my tenderness for him softens my resentment, I will guard myself against him by an oath: for really a mind

inspired by pride, let it be ever so small a share, is ashamed to break its word; and frequently at the expence of a painful struggle makes a bold attempt upon its own wishes, stands upon its honour, and sacrifices every thing to the noble pride of maintaining its word; therefore by my having now pardoned him, no judgment can be made of what yet may happen; and whatever fortune may seem to prepare; I do not think I can be the prince of Navarre's, till he has manifested an entire cure of those melancholy fits by which he is disturbed, and give me sufficient reason to think that he will never relapse into the like affront again.

Eliza. But pray, madam, what affront is the jealousy of a lover to us?

Elvira. Nothing deserves a greater resentment, and since we undergo so much when we are forced to own we love, since the rigid honour of our sex opposes a mighty obstacle to such acknowledgments, ought a lover, when he sees us surmount that obstacle in his favour; ought he, I say, with impunity to doubt that testimony? And is he not very much to blame to disbelieve that which is never said without the greatest reluctance.

Eliza. For my part, I think that we should not be offended when they are a little dissident upon such occasions; and that it is a dangerous thing, madam, for a lover to be absolutely persuaded that he is beloved.

Elvira. Let us argue no more about this; every one thinks for themselves; and in short, my soul is offended with this scruple, and notwithstanding my wishes, I feel something which forbodes an eclairecissement between the prince and me, which,

in spite of his great virtue—But who comes here?
Heavens! it is Don Silvio of Castile!

S C E N E II.

ELVIRA, D. ALPHONSO, thought to be
D. Silvio, ELIZA.

BY what surprizing turn of fortune, my lord,
have you come hither?

D. Alphonso. My arrival, madam, must needs surprize you, and my entering this town without noise, whose access is rendered difficult by order of a rival, to escape being seen by the soldiers, is an accident you did not expect to meet with; but if in this I have surmounted some obstacles, the desire of seeing you is able to affect much greater wonders. My heart has felt inexpressible torments in being absent from you, and I was not able to deny myself any longer the sight of your amiable person. I come, therefore, to tell you that I return thanks to heaven, that you are rescued from the hands of an execrable tyrant; but in the midst of this happiness, it is the greatest torture to me to see that my rigorous fate envied me the honour of this glorious deed, and too unjustly offered to my rival the agreeable dangers of that piece of service. Yes, madam, my resolutions to break your chains would undoubtedly have been equal to his, and I should have gained this victory for you, if heaven had not deprived me of that honour.

Elvira. That you have an heart capable of overcoming the greatest dangers, I very well know, my lord, and I make not the least doubt but that generous zeal which animates you to revenge my quar-

rel, would have been able to have done for me all that another hand has performed; but without this action which you was capable of I am sufficiently obliged to the house of Castile. Every one knows what the count your father has done for the late king. After having aided him to the last hour, he made his kingdom a safe asylum for my brother; full twenty years he concealed him from the cruel rage of his enemies, and now to restore to his forehead the splendor of a crown, you are marching in person against our usurpers. Are you not content? Do not these brave efforts sufficiently oblige me to you? Would you, my lord, obstinately expect to captivate my whole fate to you? And must I never receive so much as the shadow of one sole benefit, but what comes from you? Ah! suffer me in these misfortunes I am exposed to by my destiny, to owe something to the cares of another likewise, and do not complain that the glory has been acquired by another person where it was impossible for you to be.

D. Alphonso. Yes, madam, I ought not any longer to complain; you are pleased with too much reason to constrain me to it, and we unjustly complain of one misfortune, when a much greater afflicts us. This succour from a rival greatly mortifies me; but, alas! this is not the greatest of my miseries. The blow, the severe blow, which wounds me to the heart, is to see that rival preferred to me. Yes, I but too plainly see that his happy pretensions prevailed above mine; and that opportunity of serving you, that advantage which offered of signalizing his bravery, that glorious exploit in favouring you was nothing but the pure effect of the good fortune of pleasing you; the secret power of a

wondrous star which made the glory fall where your wishes were fixed. Thus all my endeavours will be nothing but air, I am leading an army against your cruel tyrants, but I march with trembling when I consider that your wishes will not be for me, and that if they are obtained, fortune prepares the happiness of more noble successes for my rival. Ah! madam, must I see myself precipitated from the glorious expectations I flattered myself with? And may I not be informed what I have done that deserves this terrible fall?

Elvira. Ask me nothing before you consider what you ought to ask of my sentiments: and as for this indifference of mine which seems to disturb you, I leave it to you, my lord, to answer for me; for, in short, you cannot be ignorant that I know some of the secrets of your soul, and I believe that soul to be too noble and generous to desire me to do what is not just. Speak; I make you the judge whether it is equitable to suffer myself to be crowned by an act of infidelity, whether you can, without the utmost injustice, offer me an heart which another has already gained; whether you have reason to complain and blame my refusal, which would prevent you from committing a crime. Yes, my lord, it is a crime, for the first flames have such sacred rights over a generous soul, that it should rather chuse to renounce grandeur, and even life itself, than incline to a second love. I have that ardour for you, which esteem may suggest for an exalted courage, for a magnanimous heart; require no more from me than what I owe you; but maintain the honour of your first choice. Notwithstanding your new flames, consider what tenderness the lovely Agnesa retains for you; who for

an ungrateful man, for such you are, my lord, has rejected the greatest offers. How generously she disdained the splendour of a diadem; remember what dangers she has defied for your sake, and render to her heart what you owe it.

D. Alphonso. Ah! madam, present not her merit to my view; it is but too conspicuous to the ungrateful man who forsakes her; and if my heart should tell you what it feels for her, I fear it would not seem innocent with regard to you. Yes, that heart dares deplore her, and does not, without difficulty, follow the imperious violence of the love that drags it. No expectation ever flattered my desires towards you, but at the same time it extorted sighs for her, and in the midst of it's pleasing thoughts employed on you, still my soul cast a melancholy look towards my first love, reproached itself with the effect of your heavenly charms, and mixed remorse with my best wishes. I have done more, since I must tell you all, I have endeavoured to free myself from your empire, to break your chains, and again subject my heart under the innocent yoke of it's first conqueror. But after all my endeavours, my constancy being overcome, is still forced to submit to the evil that kills me, and were I to be for ever wretched, I cannot renounce my desires, or bear the melancholy idea of seeing you possessed by another; and the Father of all, who discovers your charms to me, before he lends his light to that marriage, must lend it to me by death. I know I betray a charming princess, but after all, madam, is my heart guilty? Does the powerful ascendant of your beauty leave the mind any liberty? Alas! I am much more to be pitied than she; she, by losing me, loses only a faith-

Yess man; and such a sorrow is easy to be comforted; but I have that unparalleled misfortune to abandon an amiable person, and of enduring also all the torments of a rejected love.

Elvira. You have no torments but what you yourself run into, for our heart is always in our own power; it may indeed sometimes shew a little weakness, but, in short, of all our passions reason is the chief.

SCENE III.

D. GARCIA, ELVIRA, D. ALPHONSO.

D. GARCIA.

MY coming is not, madam, I observe, very seasonable, as it disturbs your conversation. I must needs say I did not expect to meet with such good company here.

Elvira. This sight indeed surprized me extremely, and I no more expected it than you did.

D. Garcia. Yes, madam, since you say so, I do not believe you were forewarned of this visit; but you, Sir, ought at least to have done us the honour to have advised us of this happiness, that we might have been prepared without surprize, to have performed those honours which are due to you.

D. Alphonso. My lord, you are so taken up with heroic cares, that I had been much to blame to have interrupted you; the sublime thoughts of victorious princes cannot easily stoop to compliments.

D. Garcia. But victorious princes, whose heroic cares are so commended, instead of loving secrecy, choose to have witnesses of what they do; their souls bred up to glory from their in-

fancy, makes them, in their undertakings, go bare-faced, and being always supported by high sentiments, never descend to mean disguises. Do you not, therefore, injure your heroic virtues in passing so secretly through these places; are you not afraid of people's looking upon this action as below your character?

D. Alphonso. Whether any body will condemn my conduct in this secret visit, I know not, but I can faithfully say I never courted obscurity in such undertakings as required the light. And were I to undertake an enterprize upon you, you should have no reason to think I surprized you, for I would take care to tell you of it beforehand. In the mean time let us continue upon the ordinary terms, and postpone our debates to other affairs. Let us suppress the boiling of our too warm blood, and not forget before whom we are both speaking.

Elvira to D. Garcia.] My lord, you are in the wrong, and his visit is such, that you——

D. Garcia. Ah! madam, it is too much to espouse his quarrel, you ought to dissemble a little better, when you pretend that you were ignorant of his coming. Your warmth and quickness to defend it is but an ill proof of its having surprized you.

Elvira. So little am I concerned at your suspicions, that I will not so much as condescend to deny it.

D. Garcia. Go on with your heroic pride, and without hesitating, let your whole heart explain itself. Do not deny any thing, since you have confessed it; it is giving too much credit to dissimulation. Be brief, lay aside scruples; say that you are sensibly touched with his passion, that his presence has something in it so pleasing, that——

Elvira. And if I have a mind to love him, can you hinder me? can you pretend to any command over my heart? and am I to regulate my desires by your direction? know that too much pride has deceived you if you think you have the least power over me, and that my sentiments arise from too great a soul to submit to fiction: I will not tell you whether the count is beloved, but know that he is very much esteemed, that his high virtue deserves a princess' love better than you; that his ardour and assiduity make all the impression on me a soul is capable of, and that if the over ruling power of fate puts it out of my power to reward him with my person, it is at least in my power to promise him that I will never become the treasure of your flames. And without amusing you any longer with vain hopes, this is what I engage myself to, and I will keep my word. I have disclosed my thoughts to you, since you will have it so, and discovered to you my real sentiments. Are you satisfied? have I sufficiently explained myself? Consider whether there remains any thing else for me to do in order to clear up your suspicions. In the interim, Don Silvio, if you persist in your resolutions to please me, I freely tell you that I have occasion for your aid; and desire your utmost efforts to punish our tyrants. Value not the transports of a capricious man, be deaf to his fury, and consider who it is makes this request of you.

S C E N E IV.

D. G A R C I A, D. A L P H O N S O.

D. G A R C I A.

WITH you every thing flourishes, your soul proudly triumphs over my confusion. It is a pleasant thing to you to hear the noble confession of that victory which you obtain over a rival, but it must be an inexpressible addition to your happiness to have that rival a witness to it, and my stifled pretensions are illustrious trophies in your triumphant eyes. Enjoy this delight, taste it with deep draughts, but know that you have not yet gained your point: I have too much reason to be enraged, and numberless events may yet happen. Despair, when it breaks loose, goes a great way, and in him that is abused nothing is unpardonable. If the ungrateful woman, in flattery to you, has just now engaged never to be mine, my indignation will furnish me with means to prevent her ever being yours.

D. Alphonso. This obstruction does not in the least disturb me. We shall soon see who is like to be the happy man; each by his valour will be able to defend the glory of his flames, or revenge their misfortune. But as between rivals, the most sedate soul is easily transported beyond the limits of reason, and as I am unwilling that such a conversation should exasperate either of us, I desire you would shew me how I may retreat out of this place.

D. Garcia. No, no; do not fear that you will be forced to violate the order that was just now

P
an
th
th
al
qu

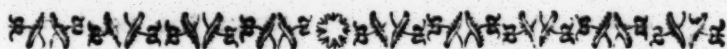
ou
tur

A
you
ende
Does
No,
penta
don i

D.
affect
was a
is wel
him to
in such
for res
report,
was a v
secret a

prescribed you. Whatever just fury oppresses me and flatters you, I know when it should break out; this place is open for you; go then and exult in the advantages you have obtained. But take this along with you, my head alone can put your conquest into your hands.

D. Alphonso. When things arrive at that pitch, our difference will presently be decided by fortune.



ACT IV. SCENE I.

ELVIRA, D. ALVAREZ.

ELVIRA.

ALL you say is to no purpose, Don Alvarez, I will never forget this offence, therefore you may return; the wound is incurable, and all endeavours to heal it make it but fester the more. Does he think I will yield to some false respects? No, he has carried things too far, and his vain repentance, which brought you hither, solicits a pardon it shall never obtain.

D. Alvarez. Madam, you would be very much affected were you to see how he is grieved; never was any offence expiated with deeper remorse. It is well known, the prince is of an age that forces him to follow the first movements of his soul, and in such boiling blood as his, passion leaves no room for reflection. D. Lopez, prejudiced by a false report, was the occasion of his master's error: there was a very confused rumour concerning the count's secret arrival, and that you connived at it. The

prince believed this report, and his love being seduced by this false alarm, has made this mighty noise. But being now recovered from his mistake, he is perfectly sensible of your innocence, and his turning away D. Lopez is a plain evidence of that quick sense he has of his offending you.

Elvira. Alas! he too easily believes me too innocent; he has not an entire assurance of it yet. Bid him weigh all things well, and not be too hasty, for fear of being deceived.

D. Alvarez. Madam, he knows too well——

Elvira. Good D. Alvarez, let us finish this discourse; I am weary of it; it revives in me an unseasonable gloominess, and disturbs other more important affairs. Yes, the surprize of a great misfortune oppresses me, and the report of Agnesa's death has so strong a right in my sorrow, as absolutely excludes all other concerns.

D. Alvarez. This may be false news, madam; but my return carries a dismal piece of news to the prince.

Elvira. The utmost torment he can suffer is short of what he deserves.

S C E N E II.

ELVIRA, ELIZA.

ELIZA.

I WAITED his departure, madam, to tell you something that will revive you again, since you will this moment be perfectly informed where Agnesa is. For this purpose a certain person unknown, has sent one of his servants to desire audience of you.

Elvira. Desire him to come immediately, Eliza; it is proper I should see him.

Eliza. But he begs that nobody may see him but yourself.

Elvira. Well, we shall be alone. I will give orders about that, while you introduce him. How great is my desire to know what news he brings! Whether, O heavens! do you send me joy or grief?

SCENE III.

D. PEDRO, ELIZA.

ELIZA.

WHERE—
D. Pedro. Here am I, madam, if you mean me.

Eliza. Where was your master when—

D. Pedro. He is hard by; shall I tell him to come?

Eliza. Yes; tell him that he is impatiently expected, and shall not be seen by any body. [alone.] There is some mystery in these precautions that I cannot penetrate. But here he comes.

SCENE IV.

AGNESE in a man's habit, ELIZA.

ELIZA.

WE have prepared, my lord—But what do I see? Ah! madam, do I really behold—

Agnesa. Do not discover me, Eliza, but let my sad destiny take vent under the fiction of having been my own murderer. This feigned death is

what has delivered me from all my tyrants; for under that name I may comprehend my relations. I have thereby avoided the hateful match, which rather than have consented to, I would have suffered a real death. Under this disguise, and the report of my death, I shall keep my fate a secret, and secure myself from that unjust persecution which may follow me even to this place.

Eliza. My astonishment might have betrayed you in public; but go into the closet there, and dry up the tears of the princess. You will find her there alone: she has been very cautious in putting away all witnesses.

S C E N E V.

D. A L V A R E Z, E L I Z A.

E L I Z A.

IS not this Don Alvarez I behold?

D. Alvarez. The prince sends me to you, to beg that you would make use of your utmost endeavours to procure him a moment's conversation with Elvira. He cannot live unless you favour him—but here he comes.

S C E N E VI.

D. G A R C I A, D. A L V A R E Z, E L I Z A.

D. G A R C I A.

ALAS! Eliza, pity my misfortunes, which weigh me down to the earth.

Eliza. I should regard your torments, my lord, with other eyes than the princess does; but hea-

ven has so ordained it, that everyone's opinion of things is quite different. And since she blames you, and fancies your jealousy to be a deformed monster, I would be complaisant, and endeavour to conceal from her eyes what might be disagreeable to them. A lover undoubtedly follows an useful method when he endeavours to accommodate his humour to ours; an hundred devoirs do less good than this one thing, for nothing is so much esteemed by us as what resembles ourselves.

D. Garcia. I know it, but, alas! the inhuman destinies oppose themselves to such well advised designs, and notwithstanding all my endeavours, are continually laying snares for me, which I cannot avoid. Not but that the ungrateful woman did, in the presence of my rival, make a too fatal confession against my interest, and testified for him so much tenderness, that it was impossible for me ever to forget it; but in short, having too hastily believed that she had introduced him into the place, I should be very much dissatisfied to leave upon her mind any just cause of which she might complain against me. Yes, if I am abandoned, it shall be only owing to the infidelity of herself; for I resolved, by excusing myself, and begging her pardon, not to leave her ingratitude the least pretence.

Eliza. Give a little time to her resentment before you see her, my lord.

D. Gracia. Ah! if thou lovest me let me see her; it is a liberty that must be granted me: I cannot stir till her cruel disdain at least——

Eliza. Pray, my lord, defer it a little.

D. Garcia. Do not trifle with me any longer.

Eliza aside.] I find the princess herself must send

him away. [To Don Garcia.] Stay here, my lord, I will go and speak to her.

D. Garcia. Tell her that I kept the person whose information was the occasion of the offence no longer in my service, but immediately turned him away, and that Don Lopez shall never—

S C E N E VII.

D. G A R C I A, D. A L V A R E Z.

D. G A R C I A looking in at the door which Eliza left open.

GOOD heaven! what is this I see? may I believe my own eyes? Alas! they are but too faithful witnesses. Now my misery is complete. This fatal blow fully makes my destruction appear, and when I found myself disturbed with suspicions, it was heaven that with mute threats foretold this horrible disgrace.

D. Alvarez. My lord, what have you seen that disturbs you so much?

D. Garcia. I have seen what I can hardly believe; I would be less surprized at the overthrow of all nature than at this accident. It is done—Fate—I cannot speak—

D. Alvarez. My lord, endeavour to compose yourself.

D. Garcia. I have seen—Vengeance, O heaven!

D. Alvarez. What sudden alarm—

D. Garcia. It will kill me, D. Alvarez, the thing is certain.

D. Alvarez. But, my lord, what can—

D. Garcia. Alas! all is over, I am betrayed; I

am murdered: a man—can I speak it without dying? a man in the arms of my treacherous Elvira.

D. Alvarez. The princess, my lord, is so virtuous that—

D. Gracia. Oppose me not, Don Alvarez, after what I have seen. It is too much to defend her after I have beheld so black an action.

D. Alvarez. Our passions, my lord, frequently make us mistake a deceiving object for a true one, and so think that a virtuous soul can—

D. Garcia. Prithee leave me, Don Alvarez, a counsellor is offensive upon this occasion; nothing shall advise me but my passion.

D. Alvarez. There is no arguing with him in this condition. [Aside.]

D. Garcia. O cruel wound! but I will see who it is, and punish with my hand—But see, she is coming, cannot thou contain thyself, my rage?

SCENE VIII.

ELVIRA, D. GARCIA, D. ALVAREZ.

ELVIRA.

WELL, what would you have? and what hopes can your boldness flatter itself with after such proceedings? Can you have the assurance to appear again before me? and what can you say that will become me to hear?

D. Garcia. I say, that all the wickedness of the damned is not so bad as your disloyalty; that destiny, the devils, nor heaven in it's wrath never produced any thing so wicked as you are.

Elvira. What is the meaning of this? I expect—

ed an excuse for an affront, but I find I am deceived.

D. Garcia. Yes, you are deceived. You did not think that by the accident of the door being open I saw the traitor in your arms, and beheld your shame and my own ruin. Is it the happy lover returned? or some other rival whom I know nothing of? Strengthen me, O heaven, to bear the racking torture! Now blush, for you have reason; the mask of your treachery is now laid aside. This is what the disturbances of my soul so frequently intimated; it was not without any just reason that my flame was alarmed; my well-grounded suspicions were seeking what now my eyes have met with. But think not that I will bear this affront unrevenged. I know that we have no power over our desires, and that love will every where grow without dependance; that there is no forcibly entering into an heart, and that every soul is free to name it's conqueror; and therefore I should have no reason to complain of you, if you had honestly expressed yourself to me at first, and my heart would have laid all the blame upon fate alone; but to see my flame approved by a false and hypocritical confession, is such a piece of treachery, such a base action, that it can never be sufficiently punished. No, no, after such an insult, hope for nothing; I am not myself, I am all rage; being betrayed on every side, my love must revenge itself to the purpose; I must, I must sacrifice every thing to my rage, and put a period to my days and despair at once.

Elvira. Since I have been so patient to all you have said, I hope I may now take the liberty to speak.

D. Garcia. And pray by what florid discourse, what artful speech—

Elvira. If you have any thing farther to say to me, you may add it, I am ready to hear it; if not, I hope you will pay a little attention to me.

D. Garcia. Well, then, I attend: ye heavens, what patience is mine!

Elvira. I bridle my wrath, and will, without the least anger, answer your mad discourse.

D. Garcia. You will perhaps—

Elvira. I have listened to you as long as you pleased; pray do the same to me. I am astonished at my destiny, and I believe there never was any thing upon earth so prodigious as it is; nothing more inconceivable for it's novelty, and nothing less supportable with respect to reason. I have a lover who makes it his whole study to persecute me, who amidst all the amorous expressions of his mouth, has no esteem for me in his heart; nothing that can do justice to the blood I sprung from, nothing that can defend the innocence of my actions against the least shadow of a false appearance. Yes, I see—[Don Garcia seems desirous of speaking.] Do not interrupt me—I see, I say, my unhappiness carried to that pitch, that one who says he loves me, and would make me believe that he would defend my reputation against the whole suspecting universe, is he that is the greatest enemy to it. He suspects me on every occasion; he not only does so, but, what wounds love, he makes a noise of it. Instead of acting like a lover, who had rather die than offend what he loves, who calmly bemoans himself, and seeks with respect to have his doubts satisfied; he proceeds to extremities, and is all rage, invectives, threats. But I will now

shut my eyes to every thing that may render him despicable to me, and by an act of mere goodness, will make this fresh affront an occasion of his future quiet. Your great rage proceeds from what you saw by mere chance; I should be in the wrong to contradict your sight, and I own you might have some reason to be uneasy at it.

D. Garcia. Is it not therefore——

Elvira. Stop a little, and you will know what I am resolved to do. It is necessary that the fates of both of us should be accomplished: you are now upon the brink of a mighty precipice, and you will either miscarry or escape, according to the course you shall now take. If, prince, regardless of what you have seen, you act towards me as you ought, and require no other proof but me, to condemn the error of your uneasiness; if by a ready compliance of your sentiments, you are willing to believe me innocent upon my word alone, and laying aside all your suspicions, blindly believe what I tell you; this submission, this mark of esteem shall cancel, in my breast, all your past misbehaviour; I instantly recede from that indignation which I have justly declared against you: and I can hereafter chuse my own lot, without prejudicing what I owe to my birth; my honour, being content with this ready obedience, promises to your love both my heart and my hand; but remember what I am going to tell you; if this offer I now make you has so little prevalence with you, as not to obtain an entire sacrifice of your jealous suspicions; if what security my heart and birth can afford is not sufficient; and if the powerful umbrages of your spirit force me to convince your senses, and to produce an evident proof of my offended virtue, I am ready to

do it, and will satisfy you; but you must depart from me that moment, and never more have any pretension to me; and I take the Almighty Judge of heaven and earth to witness, that, whatever we are destined to, I will sooner chuse to put a period to my days than to be yours. Make your choice of these two proposals; satisfy yourself, and I shall be satisfied.

D. Garcia. Good gods! was ever any thing invented with more artifice and disloyalty? Has all that the malice of hell ever studied any thing so horrid as this perfidy? Could a more cruel method be found out to perplex a lover? Ah! how well you know to employ my own weakness against me! and to manage for yourself the surprising strength of that fatal love which your traiterous eyes gave birth to! Because she is surprized, and cannot excuse herself, she cunningly offers me a pardon. Her dissembled gentleness forges an amusement to divert the effect of my wrath; and by means of the intricate knot of an election, would ward off the blow that threatens a villainous traitor. Yes, madam, your artifices would gladly deprive me of that insight which would condemn you; and your soul, pretending to be quite innocent, refuses to demonstrate itself fully, but upon such conditions, you think, as I will never accept; but you are deceived if you think to surprize me. Yes, yes, I am resolved to see what you have to defend yourself by; and what prodigy can justify what I have seen, and condemn my indignation.

Elvira. Remember that by this choice you cut off all pretensions to the heart of Donna Elvira.

D. Garcia. Be it so, I agree to it all: in the condition I am in I pretend to nothing farther.

Elvira. You will repent of the noise you have made.

D. Garcia. No, no, these are foolish stories, and I ought rather to tell you that some-body else may soon repent of it. The traitor, whoever he be, shall find it not easy to escape my rage with his life.

Elvira. This is too much, it cannot be born, my irritated heart can no longer preserve it's foolish good nature. Let us leave the ungrateful villain to his caprice; and since he will perish, let him. Eliza. [To Don Garcia.] You will force me to this discovery, but I will let you see the affront you put upon me.

S C E N E IX.

ELVIRA, D. GARCIA, ELIZA.

TELL the lovely person to come forth—Go, you know my meaning, desire it as from me.

D. Garcia. And can I——

Elvira. Patience, you shall be satisfied.

Eliza aside going out.] Without doubt this is some new touch of jealousy.

Elvira. Take care at least that this noble indignation of yours perseveres to the end; and above all, think well for the future at what price you would needs have your suspicions cleared up.

SCENE X.

ELVIRA, D. GARCIA, AGNESA, ELI-
ZA, D. ALVAREZ.

ELVIRA to D. Garcia, shewing him Agnesa.

THERE, thanks to heaven, is what occasion-
ed your obliging suspicions: behold that
face, and see if you do not observe the features of
Donna Agnesa.

D. Garcia. O heavens!

Elvira. If the rage which disturbs your soul does
at the same time hinder your sight; you have other
eyes to consult which will leave you no room to
doubt. Her death was a necessary piece of craft-
iness invented to avoid the authority of one who
persecuted her, and under this disguise she con-
cealed herself, the better to enjoy the fruit of
her feigned death. [To Agnesa.] You will for-
give me, madam, if I have been forced to betray
your secrets, and act contrary to your expectation.
His temerity is so very great that he deprives my
actions of all manner of liberty, and my honour,
urged by his suspicions, is constantly reduced to a
necessity of defending itself. Our embracing each
other, which this jealous man accidentally saw, has
made him wreak his indignation on me. This
was the reason of his rage and my disgrace. [To
D. Garcia.] Now, like an absolute tyrant, enjoy
the discovery you would needs make. But know
that I will never blot from my memory the base
insult you have been guilty of. And if ever I for-
get my oaths, may heaven pour it's severest chas-
tisements upon my head; may a thunderbolt re-

duce me to ashes when I resolve to admit your love. Come, madam, let us depart, and avoid this furious monster; let us fly from his infectious looks and the effects of his rage, and think of nothing else but how to free ourselves from his hands.

Agnesa to D. Garcia.] Even virtue itself, my lord, has been wronged by the unjust violence of your suspicions.

SCENE XI.

D. GARCIA, D. ALVAREZ.

D. GARCIA.

WHAT a cruel gleam of light dissipates my mistake, and at the same time involves my senses in so profound an horror, that I can perceive nothing but the dismal object of a remorse that kills me! Ah! Don Alvarez, I see you were in the right; but hell has breathed it's cursed venom into my soul, and by a fatal stroke of extreme rigour, my greatest enemy is within myself. To what end is it to love with the most ardent passion that ever a consumed soul discovered, if by reason of it's transports, with which I am so much tormented, that love continually renders itself hateful? I must, I must revenge with my just death, the offence I have committed against her heavenly charms: what counsel can I follow! Alas! I have lost the object for which alone life was desirable; If I were able to renounce the hope of enjoying her, I can much more renounce life itself.

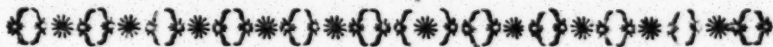
D. Alvarez. My lord——

D. Garcia. No, Don Alvarez, my death is necessary; no endeavours shall turn me from it;

but at the same time I must do some signal service to Elvira. For this end, I will seek some glorious means of ending my days, so that when I expire for her she may pity me, and say that my too great love was the occasion of my offending her. My hand must by a bold attempt give the death due to Moorgat, and boldly prevent the blow that Castile threatens him with: thus, in my death I shall have the happiness of snatching so great a glory from my rival's hopes.

D. Alvarez. A piece of such valuable service, my lord, may well make your offence be forgot, but to hazard——

D. Garcia. Let me go then, that I may make my despair subservient to this glorious attempt, by the performance of a just duty.



ACT V. SCENE I.

D. ALVAREZ, ELIZA.

D. ALVAREZ.

MY master Don Garcia has formed a design, the like of which was never heard of; despair put him upon a new resolution, which was to go and sacrifice Moorgat, assuring himself success, and hoping in his death to find a pardon, and prevent the mortification of beholding his rival a sharer of that glory. As he was going out of these gates, unhappy tidings came to him, that that rival had already obtained the honour he was going to snatch from him, and had sacrificed the traitor. In reward for which service it is publicly said that Don Alphonso intends to give him his sister in marriage; which is

not incredible, since it was he that opened him a way to the throne.

Eliza. Yes, Elvira has heard this news, and has also had it confirmed by Don Louis, who writes her word, that Leon is now waiting for the happy return of her and Don Alphonso, and that she is there to receive a fortunate turn, an husband from the hands of her brother. It is plain enough from these words of his letter that Don Silvio is the husband she is to have.

D. Alvarez. This blow to the prince's heart—

Eliza. Will without doubt strike deep: I cannot help pitying his distress, and yet, if I have any judgment, he has still a very good interest in her he has injured. I cannot find, notwithstanding the success which is boasted of, that the prince shewed very great satisfaction at the news of her brother's coming, or with the letter; but—

SCENE II.

ELVIRA, AGNESA, ELIZA, D. ALVAREZ.

ELVIRA.

DON Alvarez, tell the prince to come hither. Allow me, madam, to speak to him in your presence concerning this accident which surprizes my soul; and do not accuse me of too hasty a change, if I lay aside my resentment against him. His unforeseen misfortune has extinguished it. He is miserable enough, without the addition of my hatred. Heaven, who thus rigorously treats him, has but too well executed the oaths I have made. I was obliged by the sentence of offended honour, never to be his; but since I see fate is too severe

to his love, the ill success of what he does in my favour cancels the offence, and restores him my compassion. Yes, such rough blows have severely revenged me, disarmed my indignation, and now, by a compassionate care, I am seeking to comfort the misfortunes of a wretched lover; and I believe his flame has well deserved that compassion I would shew.

Agnesa. Madam, they would be in the wrong who should blame the tender sentiments you are inspired with, what he has done for you—he comes, and how much he is astonished with this amazing stroke plainly appears by the paleness of his face.

SCENE III.

D. GARCIA, ELVIRA, AGNESA, ELIZA.

D. GARCIA.

HOW must I appear before you, madam, whom I have—

Elvira. No more of that, Don Garcia; your destiny has made a change in my heart; and considering the dismal condition its rigour has thrown you in, my wrath is appeased, and your peace is made. Yes, though you have deserved what heaven has afflicted you with, though your jealous suspicions have sullied my fame with most incredible indignities, yet I cannot but own that I pity your misfortune to that degree as to be somewhat displeased with our success. I despise the favours of that service, when my heart must be sacrificed to reward it, and I could wish it were in my power to redeem the moments when destiny made me curse you so much. But in short, you know that

it is the fate of such as we, to be ever chained down to the public interests, and that heaven has ordained that the brother, who is concerned in the disposal of my hand, is also my sovereign. Yield as I do, prince, to this violence, to which those of my birth are subject; and if the uneasinesses of your love be great, let it comfort itself with the share that I have therein, and not make use of the power which your valour gives you in this place against this surprizing stroke; it would undoubtedly be an act unworthy of you to struggle against fate; and when it is to no purpose to oppose one's self to its rage, a ready submission shews a greatness of soul. Therefore make no resistance, but set wide the gates of Astorga to my brother, who is coming; let me render him those rights which he has a pretence to from me, and which I am resolved not to fail in; and perhaps that fatal homage which, contrary to my inclination, I offer him, may not go so far as you think.

D. Garcia. You are too good, madam, in endeavouring to sweeten the bitter draught that is prepared for me; you may, without any such reluctance, suffer the cruel thunder of your whole duty to fall on me. I have nothing to say, in the condition I am in, to you. The most severe punishments which have been invented are not too severe for me; and I know that I should be in the wrong to murmur at any thing that may befall me. Alas! in what manner could I authorize the boldness of the least complaint against you? my love has numberless times been guilty of outrages, and rendered itself hateful to you, and when, by a just sacrifice, my arm was preparing to do some service to your family, my stars abandoned me, and made

me taste the bitter grief of being prevented by my rival's arm. After this, madam, I can pretend to nothing, I deserve the blow which I expect, and I see it coming, without daring to tempt the favourable aid of your heart against it. What remains for me in this my utmost infelicity, is to seek a remedy in myself; and by a death propitious to my wishes deliver my troubled heart from all its woes. Yes, Don Alphonso will soon be in this place, and my rival already begins to appear. He seems to have flown hither from Leon, to receive the recompence of a sacrificed tyrant. Fear not that any resistance shall shew the power I have here; there is no human force which I would not defy for your safety, if you gave me your consent to do it; but I dare not presume to expect that glorious consent, I who needs must appear so despicable to you, and I would not, by vain efforts, throw the least obstacle in the way of your just designs. No, madam, I do not in the least constrain your sentiments; I will leave you in full liberty, I will open the gates of Astorga to that victorious happy prince, and patiently undergo the last cruelty of my fate.

SCENE IV.

ELVIRA, AGNESA, ELIZA.

ELVIRA.

IMAGINE not, madam, that the despair which his destiny exposes him to is the occasion of my uneasiness. You will be just to me, if you believe that your interest has no small share in the

grief with which my heart is disturbed. I am no less sensible of friendship than of love, and if I complain of any dire disgrace, it is that the dreadful wrath of heaven has from me borrowed those shafts it lances against you, and has rendered my eyes guilty of a flame which gives unworthy treatment to the goodness of your heart.

Agnesa. This, madam, is an accident which your eyes ought not to be angry with heaven for. If my weak attractions have exposed me to the ill fortune of having to do with an inconstant, heaven could not better alleviate that misfortune, than by making use of you to deprive me of that heart; I ought not at all to be ashamed of an inconstancy which demonstrates the difference between your attractions and mine. If I sigh for this change, it is because I foresee it fatal to your wishes, and in this grief which my friendship excites in me, I blame my want of merit in your behalf, not being able to retain an heart, the image whereof so much disturbs your desires.

Elvira. Rather accuse yourself of that unjust silence which has concealed the understanding there was between you two; this secret, had it been sooner known, might, perhaps, have spared both of us these uneasy troubles, and my just coldness toward him might, in their birth, have stifled the desires of a rover, and sent back—

Agnesa. Madam, he is coming.

Elvira. You may remain here, without looking at him. Do not go away, madam, but stay, and be a witness to what I shall say to him.

Agnesa. I consent, madam, yet I very well know, that were another in my place they would avoid such a conversation.

Elvira. You will not have the least reason to be sorry at it, madam, if the gods second my wishes, I assure you.

SCENE V.

ALPHONSO, ELVIRA, AGNES A.

ELVIRA.

I Beg, my lord, that you would attend to what I am going to say, before you speak. Fame has already brought to our ears the news of your victorious achievements, and I admire, as all do, at the speedy and happy turn which they have given to our destiny. I know very well that a service of so much importance can never receive a reward adequate to its deserts, and that every thing is due to you for the immortal exploits which replaces my brother on the throne of his ancestors. But tho' he offers you the homages of his heart, make a generous use of your advantages; and suffer not, my lord, this glorious blow to bring me under an imperious yoke. Do not allow your love, which knows what interest I espouse, obstinately to triumph over a just refusal. Do not permit my brother to begin his reign by an act of tyranny over his sister: Leon has abundance of rewards, which may do more honour to your high valour; an heart forcibly given you, would be too mean a present for your virtues. Can a man ever be satisfied in himself when, by constraint, he obtains what he loves? It is a woful advantage, and a generous lover disdains to be happy upon such conditions. He will not owe any thing to that violence which the right of birth exercises over our hearts, and is al-

ways too zealous for the object he loves, ever to suffer it to be sacrificed to it as a victim. Not that this heart of mine intends to reserve that for another's merit, which it refuses to yours. No, my lord, I will promise you no person shall ever have power over me, a sacred retreat shall to every other pursuit—

D. Alphonso. Madam, I have been very attentive to all that you have said, and would, by two words, have prevented it all, if your false alarm had prevailed less over you. I know that a common report which is generally believed, ascribes to me the glory of having slain the tyrant, but in short, the people alone, as we are informed, being stirred up by Don Louis to do their duty, bore away the honour of that heroic act, which I was reported to be the author of. The cause of which was this: Don Louis, the better to carry on his noble designs, had caused it to be reported, that I and my men had seized the city, and by this news he pushed on the people to cut off the usurper as soon as possible. He knew how to conduct the whole by his prudence and zeal, and has just now sent one of his servants to inform me of the whole affair. But at the same time reveals me a secret, at which I dare say you will be as much surprized as I was. You expect a brother, and Leon its true master, and now heaven presents him to your eyes. Yes, I am Don Alphonso, and being preserved and bred up under the name of the Prince of Castile, a man illustrious effect of that sincere friendship, which was between Don Louis and the king my father. Don Louis has all the proofs of this secret, and will display the truth of it to every body; and now my thoughts are taken up with other cares; not that

they are crossed with respect to your love, that my passion quarrels with such a discovery, and that the brother, in my heart, is troublesome to the lover. My flame has received, without the least murmur, from this secret, the change which nature prescribes to it, and the blood which conjoins us has so entirely detached me from the affection for you with which my heart was touched, that it now longs for nothing so much as the pleasing transports of its first chain, and the means of rendering to the amiable Agnesa that which her excessive goodness has deserved. But her uncertain destiny renders mine miserable, and if all be true that is said, in vain does Leon invite me, in vain does a throne wait for me; it is not in the power of a throne to make me happy; it has no other charms to me, than as it would let me taste the joy of placing it on that object that heaven has recalled me to, and by that means to repair, as much as possible, the injury I have done her noble virtues. It is from you, madam, I have reason to expect to be informed what has become of her. Pray instruct me in it, and by your discourse either render me for ever happy, or miserable.

Elvira. Be not surprized if I delay answering you; for this news, my lord, confounds me. I will not take upon me to say whether Agnesa be dead or alive, but this gentleman here, than whom she cannot have a more faithful friend, will give you such information as you may depend upon.

D. Alphonso knowing Agnesa.] Ah! madam, how happy am I in these perplexities to see the gleaming of your heavenly charms! But with what eye can you behold an inconstant, whose crime—

Agnesa. Ah! say not that a heart which I esteem could be inconstant. I cannot bear the thought, and the excuse troubles me. Nothing could offend me, since you loved this princess, because her high merit is a sufficient excuse for any ardour she might cause. The love you bore her does not make you in any wise guilty with respect to me; but had it been otherwise, know that you would in vain endeavour to make me forget such an affront, and that no force, no repentance should be able to cancel it in my heart.

Elvira. Ah! dear brother, the joy you give me is infinite, I love your choice, and bless the accident which causes you to crown so pure a friendship, and of two noble hearts that I dearly love—

SCENE THE LAST.

D. GARCIA, ELVIRA, AGNESA, D.
ALPHONSO, ELIZA.

D. GARCIA.

LET me not behold, madam, your great contentment, but suffer me to die in full persuasion that your duty is what commits some violence upon you. I know you have it in your power to dispose of yourself, and I do not desire to oppose your inclinations; I am all obedience. But I must own your gaiety amazes me, and shakes my resolution. It transports me so much, that I am afraid I shall not be able to command. I would punish myself if it would deprive me of that submissive respect, which is owing to you. Yes, your commands have made me bear patiently the misery of my love; they are so powerful, that I would

rather die than disobey them. Still I am shocked at your present joy, and cannot see it without concern; the most prudent people cannot answer for their conduct on such occasions. I beg you may for a moment suppress your joy, and shew some compassion for my misfortune. I cannot bear to see the happiness of a rival. I think this the smallest favour I can ask, as my disgrace gives place to another lover. I do not desire it, madam, for a long time. My absence will satisfy your wishes. I shall go where I shall only hear the account of your marriage by report, which will induce me to hasten the end of an unhappy life.

Agnesa. Suffer me, my lord, to blame your complaining, as the princess has compassion for your misfortunes. The joy at which you are displeased arises intirely from the good which is prepared for you. Your prosperity gives her pleasure, and she has found in your rival a brother. The secret is just now discovered; this is Don Alphonso, who has been so much talked of.

D. Alphonso. Thank heaven, my heart has all that it desires, after a long suffering, without abridging your happiness, and has the greater pleasure from being able to assist your love.

D. Garcia. Your excessive goodness, my lord, in offering to bear a part in my wishes, confounds me: heaven has diverted the stroke I dreaded, and any other person would imagine himself happy. But the lucky discovery of this pleasing secret makes me blameable towards the adorable object of my love; having fallen again into these treacherous suspicions, which I have been so often warned of to no purpose, I should despair of ever being happy. I deserve her hatred, and do not

deserve a pardon; whatever success fortune may give me, I deserve death, and expect it alone.

Elvira. No, no, prince, my pity is moved by your sorrow and submission. I can perceive your sincere love shine through all your actions; I see the weakness of my oaths; since the influence of the heavens is the cause of your defects, we should indulge them a little, and whether jealous or not, my king may give me to you without force.

D. Garcia. Good heavens, enable me to bear the joy this confession gives me.

D. Alphonso. I beg, my lord, that this marriage may for ever join our hearts and kingdoms, after all our vain debates; but time presses, and Leon expects us, therefore let us go and cheerfully satisfy its zeal, and give the last stroke to the tyrant's party by our presence.

T H E E N D.



THE
SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS.

A
COMEDY.

E 3

G
G
T

fe
co
ve
fer
ph
hi
To
mo
a v
an
BA
ten
int
lie
two
of
for
sim



The SCHOOL for HUSBANDS, a Comedy of Three Acts, acted at Paris, at the Theatre of the Palace-Royal, June 24th, 1661.

THE Comedy of the SCHOOL for HUSBANDS is so copious, so polished, and so simple, that few pieces, especially of three acts, can be put in competition with it; a fresh incident appears in every scene, which are artfully unfolded, and insensibly lead to one of the most excellent catastrophe's that ever appeared upon the French stage. The hint of this comedy is taken from the Adelphi of Terence; in which two old men, of opposite humours, one an uncle, and the other a father, gave a very different education, the one to his nephew, and the other to his son. In the SCHOOL for HUSBANDS are two guardians, one of an indulgent temper, the other of a rigid one, each of whom are intrusted with the education of a young girl. Moliere has improved upon Terence, in giving to his two characters not only the concern of fathers, but of lovers also, an interest so rare and lively, that it forms an entire new piece upon the ancient poet's simple plan.

A C T O R S.

SGANAREL, }
ARISTO, . } Brothers.

ISABELLA, }
LEONORA, } Sisters.

VALERE, Lover to Isabella.

LISETTA, Leonora's Waiting Woman.

ERGASTE, Valere's Footman.

A COMMISSARY.

A NOTARY.

TWO VALETS.

SCENE, a public place in Paris.




T H E

SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

S G A N A R E L, A R I S T O.

S G A N A R E L.

 I BEG we may not talk so much, brother, but let each of us live according to his own manner of thinking; notwithstanding you are older, and may be wiser, I will not be reprov'd by you, my fancy alone shall direct me.

Aristo. But your manner of living is condemn'd by every body.

Sganarel. Yes, brother, by fools like yourself.

Aristo. I am oblig'd to you for this kind compliment.

Sganarel. Since all must be discovered, I would gladly know what there is in me for these fine cavillers to find fault with.

Aristo. That morose temper, which avoids all pleasures of society, gives a whimsical air to all

your actions, and makes yourself and every thing about you appear barbarous.

Sganarel. Do you think I would make myself a slave to fashion? Certainly I should dress myself for my own pleasure; you would by your trifling stories, Mr. Elder Brother, (for, to be plain, so you are by twenty years) persuade me into the fashions of young fops; insist upon my wearing those small hats, which allow their weak brains to evaporate, and the large powdered bushy wigs, which darken the figure of a human countenance; those jerkins but just below the arms, and large bands hanging down, very long sleeves to dip in the sauce at table, and petticoats in imitation of breeches; those handsome shoes dressed out with ribbons, which appear like rough-footed pigeons, and those large rollers, where the captive legs are confined every morning, as if they were in the stocks, and which make those fine gentlemen walk with a straddle, as if they were flying?—It would undoubtedly give you great pleasure to see me dressed out in the manner as I observe you always do.

Aristo. One should not make themselves particular, but comply with the majority. An extreme on either side is offensive; no wise man should have any thing affected either in his words or cloaths, but follow what is introduced by custom. One should not imitate people who are so fond of being in extremes, that they would be uneasy if another person were a step beyond them. But I think it wrong upon one's single opinion obstinately to avoid what every other person does; it is certainly better to be among the number of fools, than to be the only one the reverse of every other person.

Sganarel. This is the opinion of an old fellow, who conceals grey hairs under a black periwig, to impose himself upon the world for younger than he really is.

Aristo. It is very odd that you must always upbraid me with my age, and rail against decency as well as chearfulness, as if old people were to think of the grave only, and not enjoy the pleasures of this world at all: old age is attended with disagreeable circumstances enough, without being slovenly and ill-tempered.

Sganarel. I am resolved to make no alteration in my dress, be it as it will. I will have a hat with a brim for to shelter my head, a long doublet, buttoned close as it should be, to keep the stomach warm for digestion; a pair of breeches made to fit my thighs, and shoes that will not pinch my toes, such as wise people wore formerly, in spite of the fashion; and whoever does not like my dress may close his eyes.

SCENE II.

LEONORA, ISABELLA, LISETTA, ARISTO and SGANAREL whispering together at the further part of the stage, without being seen.

LEONORA to Isabella.

I WILL take it all upon me to prevent your being found fault with.

Lisetta to Isabella.] What, always in a room without being seen by any body?

Isabella. Such is his temper.

Leonora. I pity you for it, sister.

Lisetta to Leonora.] It is lucky for you, ma-

dam, that his brother is quite of a different temper; and fate was very kind to you in throwing you into the hands of a reasonable man.

Isabella. It is a miracle, that he has not locked me up, or taken me with him to-day.

Lifetta. Faith I would send him to the devil with his ruff, and——

Sganarel being run against by Lifetta.] By your favour, whither are you going?

Leonora. We do not know yet; I was advising my sister to walk out and enjoy the benefit of this fine weather. But——

Sganarel, to Leonora.] For your part, you may go where you will; [pointing to Lifetta.] you have nothing to do but ramble, both of you together; [to Isabella.] but as for you, madam, if you please, I desire you may not go.

Aristo. Ah! brother, let us give them leave to go and entertain themselves.

Sganarel. I am your servant, brother.

Aristo. Young people would——

Sganarel. Young people are foolish, and old ones too sometimes.

Aristo. Do you think there is any harm in her going with Leonora.

Sganarel. No, but I would rather have her stay with me.

Aristo. But——

Sganarel. But her actions shall be under my direction: in short, I know it is my interest to take care of them.

Aristo. Am I less concerned in those of her sister?

Sganarel. Alas! every one judges and acts as he chuses. They have no relations, and our friend,

their father, in his last moments, committed the care of them to us, desiring us to marry them ourselves, or if that was not agreeable, to dispose of them to others at a proper age; by this contract he chose to give us over them from their childhood the authority of father and husband. You took the care of bringing up one, and I the other: you manage your charge as you think proper, pray let me do the same.

Aristo. I think—

Sganarel. I think, and will speak it freely, that I talk right upon this subject. You suffer yours to flaunt about taudry and fine:—I am satisfied. Let her jaunt about, love idleness, allow coxcombs to pay compliments to her;—with all my heart:—but I am determined mine shall live as I please, and not have her own will; she shall be dressed in a decent stuff gown, wear black on holidays, go little abroad, but prudently apply herself to housewifery; at her spare hours mend my linen, or for her entertainment knit stockings; she shall not hear the flattery of fops, nor go abroad without somebody to take care of her: in short, the flesh is weak, I know what is said concerning these matters, and will not wear horns if I can avoid it; and as it is her fate to marry me, I will be as sure of her person as my own.

Isabella. You have no reason, I believe—

Sganarel. Be silent; I will let you know whether you are to go abroad without me.

Leonora. What then, Sir,—

Sganarel. Lord, madam, no words; I do not talk to you, for you are too wise.

Leonora. Are you angry to see Isabella with us?

Sganarel. Why really yes, you spoil her for me. Your visits here displease me, and you will oblige me if you will make no more of them.

Leonora. Must I also tell you my real sentiments? I do not know how she puts up with this; but I know what effect suspicion would have on me; and though both one woman's daughters, we can hardly be sisters, if your usual behaviour induces her to love you.

Lisetta. So many cautions are shameful: are we in Turkey, to be locked up? It is said women are kept like slaves there, and that those people are accursed of heaven on that account. Our honour is very weak indeed, if it is necessary to watch it continually: do you think you can prevent our intentions by these precautions? No, no, the utmost craftiness is to no purpose when we take any thing into our head; upon my word, the best way is to confide in us. Confinement puts our inventions on the stretch, and he that takes it in hand brings himself into great danger, for our honour is always for guarding itself. When we are so carefully watched, we have the greater desire to do imprudent things; and were I restrained by a husband, I would be vastly inclined to realize his suspicions.

Sganarel to Aristo.] This is your manner of education, good Mr. Teacher; and you can bear it without being concerned.

Aristo. One should only laugh at what she says, brother; yet there is reason in it. Her sex loves liberty, and will not be kept from it by severity; bolts and grates, and distrustful cares will not make virtuous wives or girls; it is not authority, but honour, that will keep them to their duty. A

woman, who is prudent by force only, is a strange thing indeed. It is to no purpose to attempt to govern their actions; in my opinion the heart must be gained; and with all possible care, I should not think my honour very safe in the hands of a person, who wants only an opportunity of transgressing amongst the assaults of temptation.

Sganarel. It is all nonsense.

Aristo. Well, be it so; but it is my opinion, that young people should always be instructed with good humour; their failings should be reprov'd with meekness, and the name of virtue not made terrible to them. By these maxims I have guided my cares for Leonora; I have always complied with her youthful desires, and have not looked upon small liberties as criminal; and it gives me pleasure that I have no reason to repent of my indulgence. I have introduced her into genteel company, allowed her to attend balls, plays, and all diversions, which I think necessary to form the minds of young people; in my opinion, the world is a school, which teaches the ways of life better than can be taught by books. She takes pleasure in spending money upon fashionable cloaths and linen; what would you have me do? These pleasures should be granted to young women, when one can afford it; and I am willing to gratify her wishes. She is obliged to marry me by her father's desire, but I never will be a tyrant to her. I am sensible that there is no equality in our ages, therefore I give her her own choice; and if a great deal of tenderness, polite respect, and a thousand pounds a-year, can in her opinion make up for the difference in age, she may have me for a husband; if not, let her please herself; if she can

be happier with another person, I shall agree to it: it will give me more pleasure to see her happy with another, than to be possessed of her against her inclination.

Sganarel. He is all sweetness.

Aristo. Indeed it is my temper, and I am thankful for it; I will never follow those rigid rules which induce children to wish their parents dead.

Sganarel. But liberties of youth are not easily laid aside, and you will not be of the same way of thinking when her manner of living is changed.

Aristo. And why must it be changed?

Sganarel. Why?

Aristo. Yes, why should it?

Sganarel. I cannot tell.

Aristo. Is there any thing in it to hurt a person's honour?

Sganarel. And if you marry her, will she pretend to the same liberties which she took while she was unmarried?

Aristo. Why should she not?

Sganarel. Will you be so complaisant as to allow her ribbons and patches?

Aristo. Undoubtedly.

Sganarel. Allow her to attend all balls and assemblies like a mad creature?

Aristo. Certainly.

Sganarel. And shall the beaux come to your house?

Aristo. And what then?

Sganarel. To make merry, and give entertainments?

Aristo. I consent to it.

Sganarel. And shall your wife hear their fine speeches?

Aristo. Ay.

Sganarel. And you will behold these coxcombs visits in such a manner, as may shew you do not in the least regard them?

Aristo. Certainly.

Sganarel. Go, you are an old fool.—[to Isabella.] Get you in, that you may not hear this infamous conduct.

S C E N E III.

ARISTO, SGANAREL, LEONORA,
L I S E T T A.

ARISTO.

I WILL commit myself to the fidelity of my wife, and intend always to live as I have done.

Sganarel. How greatly will I be rejoiced when he is made a cuckold!

Aristo. I cannot tell to what fortune I am born; but I know, that for your part, if you fail to be one, the fault must not be laid on you, for you have used every precaution to avoid it.

Sganarel. Laugh on, giggler; O what a pleasure it must give one to see a buffoon of almost sixty.

Leonora. I engage to preserve him from the fate you talk of, if I marry him; he may assure himself of it: but know that my heart would be answerable for nothing, was I to be your wife.

Lisetta. There is a conscience due to those who confide in us; but it is delightful, really, to cheat such people as you.

Sganarel. Be gone with your foolish ill-bred tongue.

Aristo. You bring this ridicule upon yourself, brother. Farewell, alter your temper, and be forewarned, that locking up a wife is the worst step you can take.—Your servant.

Sganarel. I am not your's.

SCENE IV.

SGANAREL alone.

O HOW excellently they are all suited one to another! what a hopeful family; a foolish old dotard, who acts the fop in a crazy worn-out carcase, a girl that is mistress, the arrantest coquet that can be, and impertinent servants!——No, not even wisdom herself could bring it about, she would be destitute of all sense and reason to endeavour the regulation of such a family——Isabella may lose those principles of honour she has imbibed with me amongst such acquaintance; and, in order to prevent this misfortune, I intend shortly to send her back again to my cabbages and my turkies.

SCENE V.

VALERE, SGANAREL, ERGASTE.

VALERE at the further part of the stage.

THERE is the Argus that I detest, Ergaste; the rigid guardian of her I love.

Sganarel thinking himself alone.] Is not the corruption of manners now-a-days very astonishing?

Valere. I will speak to him, if I can, and endeavour to get acquainted with him.

Sganarel. Instead of seeing that severity prevail, of which in former times virtue so properly consisted, the young people hereabouts, debauched, without restraint, do not take——

Valere. He does not perceive that we are bowing to him.

Ergaste. His blind eye is on this side, perhaps; let us get to the right side of him.

Sganarel. I must leave this place.—A city life can only produce in me the——

Valere approaching him.] I must endeavour to gain admittance to his house.

Sganarel hearing a noise.] How! I thought I heard a voice—in the country, heaven be praised, I am not plagued with these fashionable fooleries.

Ergaste to Valere.] Go up to him.

Sganarel still hearing a noise.] What would he be at? my ears tingle.—There, all the amusements of our young women are—[Seeing Valere bow.] Is that to me?

Ergaste. Go nearer.

Sganarel not minding Valere.] Here no coxcomb comes.—[Valere bows again.] What the deuce!—[Turns and sees Ergaste bow on the other side.] Again?—What mean these bows?

Valere. Accosting you in this manner, Sir, interrupts you, perhaps?

Sganarel. May be so.

Valere. But why so? I was so much delighted with the honour of your acquaintance, that I desired vastly to pay my respects to you.

Sganarel. Be it so.

Valere. To wait on you, and assure you, without any dissimulation that I am wholly at your service.

Sganarel. I believe so.

Valere. I am so fortunate as to be one of your neighbours, for which I am thankful to my happy destiny.

Sganarel. That is well done.

Valere. Have you heard the news, Sir, which is current at court, and thought to be true?

Sganarel. What does it concern me?

Valere. True; however, a man, sometimes, may be curious after novelties. Will you go, Sir, and see the grand preparations for the birth of our Dauphin?

Sganarel. If I think fit.

Valere. Paris, we own, affords us numberless amusements which are no where else. The country is a solitude in comparison. How do you pass away the time?

Sganarel. About my business.

Valere. The mind should have some relaxation; it flags by too earnest an attention to serious things. In what manner do you pass the evening before bed-time?

Sganarel. As I chuse.

Valere. Certainly; nothing could be said better; it is a reasonable answer, and good sense appears in never doing any thing but what one chuses. If I thought you was not too much taken up, I should come sometimes to your house, after supper, to pass away the time.

Sganarel. Your servant.

W
Erg
receiv
Va
Er
Va
love
gon,
berty
Er
of it
Know
is wa
thers
lover
plish
galan
men
with
hom
with
thei
upo
not
kno
tag
ufa
len

S C E N E VI.

V A L E R E, E R G A S T E.

V A L E R E.

WELL, what do you think of this whimsical fool?

Ergaste. He has a surly way of answering, and receives people very savagely.

Valere. Ah! how vexed I am!

Ergaste. At what?

Valere. At what?—It provokes me to see her I love in the power of a barbarian, a watchful dragon, whose severity will not allow her the least liberty.

Ergaste. That makes for you, and on the effect of it your passion must build its surest hopes. Know, for your encouragement, that a woman that is watched is half won, and the peevishness of fathers and husbands always forwards the business of lovers. I intrigue very little, it is my least accomplishment, and I have not the least pretensions to galantry: but I have assisted twenty of your sportsmen, who often said, they were best pleased to meet with those churlish husbands, who never come home without grumbling, those fullen fellows, who without thought or reason condemn the conduct of their wives in every thing, and haughtily assuming upon the name of husband, fall out with them for nothing in the company of their admirers.—One knows, say they, to make the best of these advantages; and the lady's indignation at such kind of usage, the soft complaining, the obliging condolence of the lover upon the occasion, afford an op-

portunity to push things far enough. In short, the furliness of Isabella's guardian is a circumstance sufficiently favourable for you.

Valere. I could never find the least opportunity of conversing with her these four months that I have been in love with her.

Ergaste. Love quickens people's wits; though it has little effect on yours: if I had been—

Valere. Why, what could you have done? when she is never to be seen without that brute, and there are neither maids nor footmen in the house whom I might influence to assist my passion by the flattering temptation of a reward.

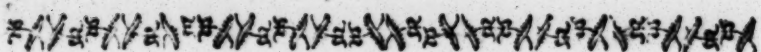
Ergaste. Does she not know yet that you are in love with her?

Valere. That is a matter which my heart is not yet informed of; where-ever that churl has carried the fair one, she has seen me continually after her like a shadow, and my looks have always endeavoured to declare to her the violence of my passion. My eyes have spoke loudly to her; but who can tell me whether they could make their language be understood?

Ergaste. That language, it is true, may sometimes prove unintelligible, if it has neither writing nor speech for its interpreter.

Valere. What shall I do to get out of this extreme uneasiness, and learn if the fair one knows I love her?—Let me know by some means.

Ergaste. That is what must be contrived. Let us go into your house a little, that we may consider of it better.



A C T II. S C E N E I.

ISABELLA, SGANAREL.

SGANAREL.

YOU need go no farther, I know the house and person by the marks alone that you give me.

Ifabella aside] Be favourable to me now, ye gods! and let the artful contrivance of an innocent passion succeed.

Sganarel. His name is Valere, I think you say people tell you?

Ifabella. Yes, they told me so.

Sganarel. Go, be easy: get you in, and leave me to do it. I will go talk immediately to this young rake.

Ifabella going.] The project I am now about is a very bold one for a young girl; but every considerate person will readily forgive me, when they know how severely I am treated.

S C E N E II.

SGANAREL alone, knocking at the door, thinking it is Valere's.

LET us lose no time: this is the place.—Who is there?—Well, I am thinking.—Soho, I say, soho, somebody. I am not surprized, after this discovery, that he came thither just now in so

complaisant a manner; but I will be expeditious, and his foolish hope—

S C E N E III.

VALERE, SGANAREL, ERGASTE.

SGANAREL to Ergaste, who comes out hastily.

DEUCE take the lubberly ass, who plants himself like a post directly before me, in order to throw me down.

Valere. Sir, I am sorry for that——

Sganarel. Ah! it is you I look for.

Valere. Me, Sir?

Sganarel. Yes you: is not your name Valere?

Valere. Yes.

Sganarel. I come to speak with you, if you please.

Valere. I shall do all in my power to serve you.

Sganarel. I am obliged to you, but I myself intend to do a good turn for you; and that is what brings me to your house.

Valere. To my house, Sir?

Sganarel. To your house; need you be so astonished at that?

Valere. I have great reason to be so, and the honour you do me is——

Sganarel. Pray talk no more of honour.

Valere. Will not you walk in?

Sganarel. There is no occasion for it.

Valere. Sir, pray go you first.

Sganarel. No; I will not go a step farther.

Valere. I cannot hear you whilst you remain here.

Sganarel. I will not stir.

Valere. Well, I must submit:——Since the gentleman is resolved upon it, bring a chair hither, quickly.

Sganarel. I will talk standing.

Valere. Can I suffer you in this manner!

Sganarel. Oh! it is a terrible force upon you!

Valere. Such rudeness would be too inexcusable.

Sganarel. Nothing can be so rude as not to pay attention to people that would speak to us.

Valere. I obey you then.

Sganarel. You cannot do better. [They use abundance of compliments about putting on their hats.] So much ceremony is needless.——Will you hear me?

Valere. Undoubtedly, and with a great deal of pleasure.

Sganarel. Answer me then;—Do you know that I am the guardian of a handsome young woman, called Isabella, who lodges in this neighbourhood?

Valere. Yes.

Sganarel. If you know it, I need not inform you—but do you know likewise, that being sensible of her charms, I am concerned for her in another manner than as a guardian, and that she is destined to the honour of my bed?

Valere. No.

Sganarel. Then I inform you of that; and, that it is very fit you should not disturb her with your passion.

Valere. Who, I, Sir?

Sganarel. Ay, you:—you need not dissemble.

Valere. Who told you that I had a passion for her?

Sganarel. People that one may believe.

Valere. But who, pray?

Sganarel. She herself.

Valere. She!

Sganarel. Ay, she: Is that saying enough?—
Like an honest girl, that has loved me from her infancy, she told me all, just now; and more than that, charged me to let you know, that since she has been followed every where by you, her heart, which your pursuit exceedingly offends, has understood but too well the language of your eyes; that she very well knows your secret wishes; and that it is giving yourself a needless trouble to endeavour at explaining a passion farther, which is contrary to that affection she reserves for me.

Valere. Is it she, do you say, that from herself made you—

Sganarel. Ay,—come to give you this frank and faithful account; and that having observed the violent love which disturbs your mind, she would have made known her intentions to you, if, under such emotion of soul, she could have found any body to send this message by; but that, at last, the vexation of being under a strict confinement, brought her to make use of me, to apprize you, as I have told you, that her affection must be granted to nobody but me; that you have ogled her long enough, and that, if you have ever so little understanding, you will take some other measures.—
Adieu, till I see you again—this is what I had to tell you.

Valere low.] What think you of this adventure, Ergaste?

Sganarel low aside.] He is greatly amazed.

Ergaste low to Valere.] 'Tis my opinion, there

is nothing in it to displease you, but that some subtle mystery is concealed under it: and in short, that this message does not come from one who would destroy the love she inspires in you.

Sganarel aside.] He takes it right.

Valere low to Ergaste.] You judge it to be mysterious.

Ergaste low.] Yes—but we are observed by him; let us get out of his sight.

SCENE IV.

SGANAREL alone.

HIS confusion plainly shews that he expected no such message! But—let us call Isabella; she shews what effect education has upon the mind. So virtuous is she, that she is displeased at the very looks of a man.

SCENE V.

ISABELLA, SGANAREL.

ISABELLA to herself entering.

MY lover I am afraid does not understand the intention of my message, so full he is of my passion; and since I am such a prisoner, I will run the risque of another that may speak my meaning plainer.

Sganarel. Here I am returned.

Isabella. Well.

Sganarel. Your message has had its full effect; your man's business is done. At first he would not confess that his heart was sick with love, but when I assured him I came from you, he was struck

immediately dumb and confounded, and I do not think he will come any more hither.

Isabella. Ha! what do you say? I very much apprehend the contrary, and that he is again cutting out more work for us.

Sganarel. What makes you think so?

Isabella. No sooner was you got out of doors, than, putting my head out at the window to take the air, I saw a young fellow at yonder turning, who came very surprisngly, to wish me a good morning from that impertinent fellow, and flung a box directly into my chamber, in which was a letter sealed like a billet-doux.—I would immediately have thrown it back to him, but he was got to the end of the street, and my heart swells with vexation at it.

Sganarel. Observe the cunning, the knavery!

Isabella. It is my duty to send back immediately the box and letter to this woeful lover, and I shall want somebody for that purpose, for to make bold with you——

Sganarel. On the contrary, dearee, it convinces me the better of your affection and fidelity; my heart joyfully accepts the office, and I cannot express how much you oblige me by it.

Isabella. Take it then.

Sganarel. Well, let us see what he could write to you.

Isabella. O heavens! be sure not to open it.

Sganarel. For what reason?

Isabella. Would you give him the least occasion to imagine it was I?——A woman of honour ought always to avoid reading the letters a man sends her; the curiosity one then discovers, shews a secret pleasure in hearing one's self praised; and I think it

proper this letter should immediately be carried to him, sealed up as it is, that he may so much the better learn how I hate him; that his passion may not have the least hope henceforward, and no more attempt the like extravagance.

Sganarel. She has certainly reason for what she says.———Well, I am delighted with your virtue and discretion. I perceive that my instructions are rooted in your soul: and, in a word, you shew that you deserve to be my wife.

Isabella. I would not, however, balk your curiosity: you have got the letter, and you may open it.

Sganarel. Alas: I have not the least curiosity;—no, your reasons are too good for that, and I am just going to discharge the trust you put in me; afterwards, I shall step a little way to speak a word or two, and then return to make you easy.

S C E N E VI

SGANAREL alone.

HOW happy am I in finding her such a prudent girl! She is a treasure of honour in my family! to take the glances of love for treason, receive a billet-doux as a very great injury, and send it back again to her gallant by me! I have a great desire to know, whether upon such an occasion my brother's damsel would have acted thus. Faith, girls are just what they are taught to be—Soho.

[Knocking at Valere's door.

S C E N E VII.

S G A N A R E L, E R G A S T E.

E R G A S T E.

WH O is there?

Sganarel. Takethis; and tell your master that he must not any more impertinently presume to write letters and send them with golden boxes, and that Isabella is very vexed at it. See, she has not so much as opened it. He will find how much she regards his passion, and what happy success he ought to expect from it.

S C E N E VIII.

V A L E R E, E R G A S T E.

V A L E R E.

WH A T have you got from that peevish fellow?

Ergaste. This letter, Sir, which, with this box, he pretends that Isabella received from you, and about which, he says, she is very angry. She sends it back to you without so much as opening it; read it quickly, and let us see if I am mistaken.

Valere reads.] “ You will undoubtedly be surprized at this letter: and both the design of writing, and the manner of getting it to you, may be thought very rash in me: but I find myself in a situation not to observe forms any longer. The just dread of a marriage wherewith I am threatened in six days, makes me run all risques: and being resolved to free myself by some means or

" other, I believe, that I ought rather to choose
 " you than despair. However, you need not think
 " that you are wholly obliged to my evil destiny:
 " it is not the constraint I am under that gives birth
 " to the sentiments I have for you; but it is that
 " which makes me discover them, and forces me
 " to pass over those formalities which the decency
 " of my sex requires. It depends on yourself al-
 " lone to have me speedily yours, and I wait you
 " till you shew me what your love designs, before
 " I let you know the resolution I have taken: but
 " above all, remember that time is pressing, and
 " that half a word is enough for two hearts in
 " love."

Ergaste. Well, Sir, is not this contrivance an original? For a young creature, her understanding in this affair is not amiss. Who would imagine her capable of these love stratagems?

Valere. Ah! She is an amiable creature! This stroke of her wit and friendship even doubles my passion for her; and adds to the sentiments where-with her beauty inspires me.

Ergaste. The ruffian is coming; consider what you must say to him.

S C E N E IX.

SGANAREL, VALERE, ERGASTE.

SGANAREL thinking that he was alone.

OTHRICE and four time blest be this e-
 dict which prohibits extravagance in dress!
 The uneasiness of husbands will be no more so grievous,
 and wives will now be limited in their demands.
 Oh! how I am obliged to the king for this de-

cree! And, for the satisfaction of the said husbands, how I wish that coquetry was prohibited as well as laces and embroidery. I have bought the edict on purpose for Isabella to read to me; and that, for want of other employment, shall be our diversion by and by after supper. [seeing Valere.] Will you send love-letters with golden boxes again, Mr. Fribble? You surely thought to find some young coquette, fond of intrigues, and easily melted down by flattery; but you see with what an air your presents are received; and be assured, it is spending your powder to kill sparrows. She is discreet; she loves me; and she is affronted at your passion; away, bag and baggage, therefore, and form your designs elsewhere.

Valere. Ay, indeed, Sir, your merit, to which every body yields, is too powerful an obstacle to my addresses; and however sincere my passion be for Isabella, it is in vain to contend with you.

Sganarel. It is true, it is a folly.

Valere. Nor should I have devoted my heart to the pursuit of her beauty, could I have foreseen that this miserable heart should find a rival so formidable as you.

Sganarel. I believe it.

Valere. I now, Sir, yield to you, without murmuring, as I can no longer hope for any favour.

Sganarel. You do well.

Valere. Reason will have it so; for you are so virtuous, that I should be in the wrong to behold with an angry eye the tender sentiments Isabella has for you.

Sganarel. That is to be supposed.

Valere. Yes, yes, I yield to you. But, Sir, I beseech you, (and it is the only favour a wretched

lover begs, whose present torment you are the sole reason of:) I conjure you then, to assure Isabella, that if for three months past my soul has loved her, its passion has been pure and spotless, and never had a thought which her honour could reasonably be displeased at.

Sganarel. Ay.

Valere. That having nothing but my own inclinations to gratify, all my designs were to obtain her for a wife, if, in you, who are now the sole possessor of her heart, fate had not opposed an obstacle to this just passion.

Sganarel. Mighty well.

Valere. That, happen what will, she must not imagine I can ever forget her charms; that in what manner soever I must submit to the degrees of heaven, I am destined to love her as long as I live; and that, if any thing stifles my addresses, it is the just regard I have for your merit.

Sganarel. That is wisely said, and I am going to inform her of this discourse, at which she will not be displeased; but if you will trust to me, endeavour earnestly to drive this passion out of your head.

——— Adieu.

Ergaste. Excellent bubble!

S C E N E X.

S G A N A R E L alone.

I AM very sorry for this poor good-natured fellow; but it was unhappy for him to think of taking a fort that I had subdued.

[Sganarel knocks at his door.

S C E N E XI.

SGANAREL, ISABELLA.

SGANAREL.

NEVER did a letter returned unopened give a lover more uneasiness: his hopes, in short, are quite destroyed, and he is withdrawn: but he begged me to tell you, that in loving you, his passion has been pure and spotless, and never had a thought which could in the least displease your honour; and that having only his own inclinations to gratify, all his desires were to obtain you for a wife if fate had not, by making me possessor of your heart, opposed him; that, let what will happen, you must not imagine that he can ever erase your charms out of his mind; that whatsoever decrees of heaven he must submit to, he is destined to love you even to the latest gasp: and that, if any thing stifles his addresses, it is the just regard he has for my merit. These are his own words, and so far from blaming him, I think him an honest fellow, and pity him for loving you.

Isabella softly.] I have not been mistaken in my belief of his passion; his looks assured me always of its innocence.

Sganarel. What do you say?

Isabella. That it is unkind to me to pity a man so much whom I hate so much; and that if you loved me, as you say you do, you would be sensible how I am affronted by his addresses.

Sganarel. But he did not know your mind; and for the honesty of his intention, his love does not deserve——

Isabella. Is it a good intention, pray now, to think to run away with people? Is it acting like a man of honour to form designs of taking me from you, and marrying me by force, as if I was a creature that could bear life after such infamy being thrown upon me?

Sganarel. How?

Isabella. Yes, really, this base lover, I understand, talks of running away with me; but I cannot imagine, for my part, by what secret means he learned so soon that you intended to marry me at farthest in eight days, since it was but yesterday you told me so; but, it is reported, he will prevent that day which should unite your fate and mine.

Sganarel. That signifies nothing.

Isabella. O! pardon me; he is a very honest man, and does not retain for me——

Sganarel. He is in the wrong, and this is carrying the jest too far.

Isabella. Come, your mildness encourages his folly. If, just now, he had found you talk ill-naturedly to him, he would have been afraid of your rage and my resentment, for it is even since his letter was rejected, that he spoke of this scandalous design; and, as far as I can see, his passion makes him still imagine that my heart approves of him, that I avoid marrying, whatever the world may think of it, and that I should with joy find myself out of your clutches.

Sganarel. He is a fool.

Isabella. He knows how to disguise himself before you, and his intention is to amuse you: But be certain the traitor imposes upon you with his fair speeches. I am very unhappy, I am sure, that not-

withstanding all my endeavours to live with honour, and repulse the addresses of a vile seducer, I must be exposed to the vexation of his infamous attempts upon me.

Sganarel. Well, fear nothing.

Isabella. For my part, I assure you, that unless you shew yourself exceeding angry at so impudent an attempt, and quickly find out some way to free me from the persecutions of such a rash creature, I will give up every thing, and not endure the affronts I receive from him.

Sganarel. Come, be not so much vexed, my love; I will go find him out and tell him what you say.

Isabella. However, tell him, that it is in vain for him to deny it, for I was credibly informed of his design; and that after this notice, I dare defy him to surprise me, whatever he may attempt. In a word, that without farther loss of time and trouble, he may be sensible what my sentiments are towards you, and that, if he would avoid making mischief, he must not want being told the same thing twice.

Sganarel. I will give him a right answer.

Isabella. But do it in such a manner that he may be sensible it comes from my very soul.

Sganarel. Fear nothing, I will tell him every thing.

Isabella. I am impatient for your return, pray make all possible haste. I languish if you are from my sight one moment.

Sganarel. Go, my heart's delight, I will return immediately.

S C E N E XII.

S G A N A R E L alone.

IT is impossible to find a discreeter or better young woman.—Ah! how I am rejoiced in finding a wife according to my own wish! Ay, thus wives ought to be, and not like some I know, downright coquettes, that suffer themselves to be courted, and make their honest husbands be pointed at thro' all the town. [Knocking at Valere's door.] Soho, there, where is Valere, that enterprizing youth?

S C E N E XIII.

V A L E R E, S G A N A R E L, E R C A S T E.

V A L E R E.

WHAT brings you here now, Sir?
Sganarel. Your follies.

Valere. What do you mean?

Sganarel. You know well enough what I want to speak to you about. I tell you plainly, I took you to be a more sensible young man than you are. You came to amuse me with your fine speeches, and secretly retain your own foolish hopes. I was inclinable to use you gently, but at last you will force me into a passion. Are you not ashamed, considering who you are, to invent such projects as you do, to intend running away with a woman of honour, and interrupting a marriage on which depends her whole happiness?

Valere. Who told you this wonderful news, Sir?

Sganarel. You need not dissemble. I have it

from Isabella; who, for the last time, sends you word by me, that she has plainly enough discovered to you whom she chuses; that her heart, which is wholly mine, is enraged at such an invention; that she had rather die than be so grossly insulted; and that you will occasion terrible doings, unless you put an end to all this uneasiness.

Valere. If she really said what you inform me, I confess my passion can pretend to nothing farther. These expressions are clear enough to let me see all is over, and I must revere the sentence she has passed.

Sganarel. You need not in the least doubt it. Do you imagine all the complaints I have brought from her to you are mere pretences? Would you have her come herself and tell you? If you will not believe it, follow me, you shall see if I have added any thing, and if her youthful heart is in suspense between us.

[Going to knock at his own door.

S C E N E XIV.

ISABELLA, SGANAREL, VALERE,
ERGASTE.

ISABELLA.

WHAT do you mean? Do you take his part, and bring him to me? Do his noble qualities charm you so much, that you will force me to love him, and endure his visits?

Sganarel. No, dearee, I set too great a value on your heart for that; but he imagines what I told him to be an errant fiction, he believes it is all my own invention, and that I cunningly represent you

full of hate towards him, and tendernefs for me; wherefore, from your own mouth I would cure him infallibly of an error which encourages his paffion.

Ifabella. What, does not my foul fully declare its meaning to you, and can you ftill be doubtful whom I love?

Valere. Indeed, madam, I might well be furprized at whatever the gentleman faid to me from you. I was in doubt, I own, and that final fentence which determines the fate of my unbounded paffion, muft be fo fenfibly felt by me, that you cannot be in the leaft offended if I defire the repetition of it.

Ifabella. No, no; you muft not be furprized at fuch a fentence; he told you my real thoughts, and I conceive them founded on reafon fufficient to prove how fincere they are. Yes indeed, I would have it known, and I ought to be credited, that fate here prefents two objects to my view, which infpiring me with different fentiments, agitate all the paffions of my foul. One, by a reasonable choice, whereto honour engages me, poffeffes all my efteem and love; and the other, in return for his affection, has all my rage and abhorrence. I am delighted with the prefence of the one, but the fight of the other infpires my heart with fecret emotions of hatred and horror. I defire nothing better than to be the wife of the one, but I had rather lofe my life than be married to the other. But it is fufficient that I declare my real fentiments, and languish too long under thefe cruel torments; the perfon I love muft now exert his diligence to deftroy intirely the expectations of him I hate, and deliver me by a happy marriage from a punifhment I dread much more than death.

Sganarel. Ay, my dearee, I intend to satisfy thy wish.

Ifabella. I cannot be easy unless you do it.

Sganarel. You shall be so shortly.

Ifabella. I know it is indecent for young women to declare their love so freely.

Sganarel. No, no.

Ifabella. But these liberties may be allowed in the condition I am at present; and I can, without a blush, make this tender acknowledgment to him whom I already look upon as my husband.

Sganarel. Ay, my lovely child, my soul's delight.

Ifabella. Then pray let him think of proving his passion for me.

Sganarel. Ay, there, kiss my hand.

Ifabella. Without further courtship, let him conclude a marriage, which I earnestly desire; and accept the assurance I now give him that I will never hearken to the vows of any other person.

[She pretends to embrace Sganarel, and gives her hand to Valere to kiss.

Sganarel. Ha, ha, my pretty-face, my amiable dearee: you shall not pine very long, I promise you. Go, say no more. [To Valere.] You see she speaks freely, and loves none but me.

Valere. Well, madam, very well, your meaning is plain enough: I learn by this discourse what it is you urge me to; and ere long, I shall be able to remove from your presence him who is the occasion of so much uneasiness to you.

Ifabella. You cannot oblige me more agreeably, for, in short, the sight of him is grievous to endure; I hate him, and am——

Sganarel. So so.

Ifabella. Are you displeased with what I say?
Do I——

Sganarel. Alas! by no means, I do not say that;
but, without lying, I pity his condition, and your
aversion shews itself too violently.

Ifabella. I cannot shew it too much on such an
occasion.

Valere. Well: you shall be satisfied; and af-
ter three days never more shall your eyes behold the
hated object.

Ifabella. I wish it may be so. Farewel.

Sganarel. I am very sorry for you: but——

Valere. Nay, you shall hear no complaint at all
from me; the lady certainly does justice to us both,
and I will endeavour to satisfy her wishes.—Fare-
wel.

Sganarel. Unhappy youth! how much he is
grieved! Come embrace me, for I am your second
self.

SCENE XV.

ISABELLA, SGANAREL.

SGANAREL.

I THINK he is greatly to be pitied.

Ifabella. Pho! not at all.

Sganarel. I am greatly charmed with your love,
my dearee, and I wish it was rewarded. Eight
days are too long to stay, considering your impati-
ence; I will marry you to-morrow, and will not
invite-----

Ifabella. To-morrow?

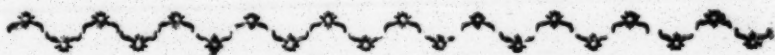
Sganarel. You pretend reluctance out of mo-

deity, but I know what joy my saying so gives you, and you wish it was already concluded.

Isabella. But—

Sganarel. Let us go prepare every thing for this wedding.

Isabella aside.] How shall I now, ye gods! prevent this fatal match?



A C T III. S C E N E I.

I S A B E L L A.

DEATH, when compared to this fatal marriage, to which I am forced, is nothing; and whatever I do to avoid the terrors of it, ought to find some favour with those who censure me. Time presses: it is night: let me therefore go boldly, and commit my safety to the fidelity of a lover.

S C E N E II.

S G A N A R E L, I S A B E L L A.

Sganarel speaking to the people in the house.

I AM returned, and to-morrow I will send—
Isabella. O heaven!

Sganarel. Is it you, my love? Whither do ye go so late? When I went out you said you was much fatigued, and would shut yourself up in your chamber: nay, you begged that I would let you be quiet at my return, and not trouble you till to-morrow morning.

Isabella. It is true; but—

Sganarel. But what?

Isabella. I am perplexed, you see, nor do I know what excuse to make to you for it.

Sganarel. How so? What can this mean?

Isabella. A wonderful secret: The reason of my going abroad at this present is, because my sister has, with a design for which I very much blame her, desired my chamber of me, where I have shut her up.

Sganarel. For what purpose?

Isabella. Why, this very youth whom we have discarded is beloved by her.

Sganarel. Who? Valere?

Isabella. She is desperately in love with him. Her coming to me at this hour of the night to disclose her passion plainly shews how violent it is: she says that she shall certainly die if she does not obtain what she so much desires; that their amour has been carried on above a year; and that they made each other mutual promises of marriage at the very beginning of their fondness.

Sganarel. A villain!

Isabella. That being informed to what despair I have driven the man she loves, she came to beg I would suffer her passion, to prevent a separation, which would much grieve her, and allow her to entertain her galant this evening in my name at my chamber window which looks into the little street, where, counterfeiting my voice, she may talk a little kindly to him, and thereby tempt his stay; in short, that she may dexterously manage to her own advantage the regard he is known to have for me.

Sganarel. And can you imagine that----

Isabella. For my part, I am provoked at it. What, sister, said I, are you out of your wits? Are you

not ashamed to be thus in love with a man who is inconstant, and changes every day? To forget your sex, and deceive the hopes of a man whom heaven has appointed for you?

Sganarel. He well deserves it, and I am very glad of it.

Isabella. In short, I used every method to dissuade her from making such a request; but she begged so earnestly, wept and sighed to such a degree, and told me that I would drive her to despair if I denied to gratify her passion, that I was obliged to yield; and to justify this night's intrigue, which a tenderness for my own blood made me give way to, I was going to get Lucretia to come and lie with me, who is so much praised by you for her virtue; but your speedy return has greatly surprized me.

Sganarel. No, no, I will not have this juggling at my house; I could agree to it so far as it concerns my brother, but they may be seen by somebody in the street, and she whom I honour with my person should not only be modest and well-bred, but she must not even be suspected. Let us go turn out the shameless creature; and for her passion---

Isabella. For God's sake do not do that; you will greatly confound her, and she may justly complain how badly I can keep a secret. As you will not allow me to countenance her design, stay here at least till I let her out.

Sganarel. Well then, do so.

Isabella. But above all things conceal yourself, I beseech you, and let her go without speaking one word to her.

Sganarel. Well, for thy sake I will restrain my

wrath; but as soon as she is gone, I will go and tell the whole affair to my brother.

Ifabella. Pray do not mention my name. Good night to you, for I am going to shut myself up this moment.

Sganarel. Until to-morrow, dearee. [Alone.] How impatient am I to see my brother, and inform him of this accident? The good man is bubbled, with all his wisdom, and I would not be without this discovery for an hundred crowns.

Ifabella in the house.] Yes, sister, I am sorry to incur your displeasure, but it is impossible for me to gratify you; my honour, which is dear to me, runs too great a risque by it; farewell; be-gone immediately.

Sganarel. There she goes; she's a sweet baggage, I warrant ye: let us lock the door, for fear she should come back again.

Ifabella entering.] Desert me not, good heavens! in my enterprize.

Sganarel aside.] Whither can she be going? I will follow her a little.

Ifabella aside.] The night, however, favours me in my distress.

Sganarel aside.] To Valere's lodgings! What a gypsey is this!

SCENE III.

VALERE, ISABELLA, SGANAREL.

VALERE coming out hastily.

YES, yes, I will try some way this very night to speak—Who is there?

Ifabella. Softly, Valere, it is Ifabella who now

speaks to you, therefore trouble yourself no farther.

Sganarel. You lie, huffy, it is not she. She follows closely those laws of honour which you forsake, and you assume falsely both her name and voice.

Isabella. But if I thought that you would not by the most sacred ties—

Valere. Indeed, that is the only purpose of my destiny; and I here solemnly declare to you, that to-morrow, I will go where-ever you please to perform the ceremony.

Sganarel aside.] Poor self-cozened fool!

Valere. Go in, and fear nothing: I now defy your fantastical guardian's power; and sooner shall this arm pierce his heart, than he shall again be in possession of thee.

S C E N E IV.

S G A N A R E L alone.

I Have not the least inclination, I assure you, to take from you such a scandalous gypsey, enslaved to her passion; your promise to her does not make me jealous, and you have my free consent to take her. Ay, let us catch him with this impudent creature: the memory of her father, well worthy of respect, together with the great interest I have in her sister, requires my endeavours at least to preserve her honour.—Soho!

[Kneeling at a commissary's door.

S C E N E V.

SGANAREL, the COMMISSARY, the NOTARY,
Attendant with a Flambeau.

COMMISSARY.

WHO is there?

Sganarel. Your servant, Mr. Commissary; we want a cast of your office; please to follow me with your light.

Commissary. We are going to—

Sganarel. The affair is in great haste.

Commissary. What is it?

Sganarel. To go in there, and surprize two people together, who must be honestly married: it is a girl of ours whom a youth called Valere has deceived, and got into his house by promising her marriage; she is descended from a noble and virtuous family, but—

Commissary. If it is for that, our meeting is very lucky, for here is a Notary with us.

Sganarel. Sir.

Notary. Yes, Sir, a public Notary.

Commissary. And also a man of honour.

Sganarel. That is to be supposed. Go in at the door, make no noise, but mind that no body gets out: you shall be fully satisfied for your pains: but do not suffer yourselves to be greased in the fist however.

Commissary. How? Do you imagine that officers of justice—

Sganarel. I do not say it as a reflection upon your office. I will fetch my brother hither this

moment. Let the flambeau light me. [*Aside.*]
I will go congratulate this Solomon. Soho.

[Knocking at Aristo's door.]

S C E N E VI.

A R I S T O, S G A N A R E L.

A R I S T O.

WHO knocks?—Oh! brother, what brings you here at this time of the night?

Sganarel. Come along, poor superannuated fop, I will shew you something that is pretty.

Aristo. What do you mean?

Sganarel. I bring you good news.

Aristo. What is it?

Sganarel. Where is your Leonora, pray?

Aristo. What is the reason of your asking? She is at a friend's house, I believe, at a ball.

Sganarel. Hey! ay, ay, follow me: you shall see what kind of ball she is at.

Aristo. I do not understand you.

Sganarel. She now plainly maketh it appear how well you have brought her up. It is cruel to be constantly finding fault; the mind is easily won by gentleness; and neither maids nor wives are rendered virtuous by bolts, grates, and distrustful cares. The sex requires a little liberty, and by severity we occasion them to do amiss. She has really taken her fill of it, a cunning baggage, and virtue with her is grown exceeding gentle.

Aristo. I cannot in the least apprehend what you mean by this discourse.

Sganarel. Come, Mr. Elder-brother of mine, it is what you well deserve; and I would not for

twenty pistoles, but that you should have this fruit of your silly maxims. It is plain what effect our instructions have produced on two sisters: one shuns galants, and the other runs after them.

Aristo. If you do not speak plainer I cannot—

Sganarel. Why then you must know, that her ball is at Valere's, that I myself saw her go thither, not an hour ago, and that he just now has her in his arms.

Aristo. Who?

Sganarel. Leonora.

Aristo. Leave off your bantering, I beseech you.

Sganarel. Bantering! it is very good to hear him talk of bantering: poor soul! I tell you again and again, that your Leonora is just now with Valere, and that they were engaged by a mutual promise before he thought of following Isabella.

Aristo. So improbable is this story, that----

Sganarel. He will not believe it, though he sees it. It makes me mad. When people are defective here, years avail nothing.

[Pointing to his forehead.

Aristo. Do you think, brother, that----

Sganarel. No, no, only follow me, your mind shall presently be made easy. You shall see if I impose upon you, and if they have not been contracted for more than a year past.

Aristo. Is it likely she should consent to this engagement without apprizing me of it! me, who always from her infancy upon every occasion have practised towards her a compliance, and have times innumerable told her that I would never force her inclinations, but let her chuse whom she pleased!

Sganarel. In short, your own eyes shall judge of the matter: I have already fetched a Commis-

fary and a Notary, it is our interest that the honour she has lost should be repaired upon the spot by marriage; for I do not imagine you will be so mean-spirited as to make her your wife with this stain upon her, unless you have some new arguments to place you above ridicule.

Aristo. I shall never, I hope, be so weak, as to desire to possess a heart which inclines more to any other person than to me. Nevertheless, I cannot believe——

Sganarel. What a talking you make! come along, this dispute would last for ever.

S C E N E VII.

COMMISSARY, NOTARY, SGANAREL, ARISTO.

COMMISSARY.

IF you desire that they should be married, gentlemen, you need make use of no compulsion, for they are both equally inclined to it. And, as to what concerns you, Valere has given it under his hand already, that he designs for his wife her who now is with him.

Aristo. The girl——

Commissary. She is locked up, and unless you promise to gratify their desires, will not stir a foot.

S C E N E VIII.

VALERE, COMMISSARY, NOTARY,
SGANAREL, ARISTO.

VALERE at the window.

NOT a soul shall enter here, gentlemen, till you let me know what you want. You know very well who I am, and I have done my part in signing the instrument, which they may shew you: if you intend to consent to the match, you must likewise set your hand to a confirmation of it; but, if not, depend upon it, you shall kill me sooner than take from me the object of my love.

Sganarel. Nay, we do not design to separate you from her. [Aside] He is still ignorant who it is that he has got, he thinks it is Isabella; let us take advantage of his error.

Aristo to Valere.] But is that Leonora?

Sganarel to Aristo.] Hold your tongue.

Aristo. But—

Sganarel. Be quiet.

Aristo. I would know—

Sganarel. What, again? hold your tongue, I tell you.

Valere. In short, whatever be the consequence, Isabella has my solemn promise, as I have her's, and I am not a match, considering every thing, which you shall be admitted to disapprove.

Aristo to Sganarel.] What he says is not—

Sganarel. Hold your tongue: I have a reason for it: and you shall know the secret. Well, without any more ado we both agree that you are to marry her who is now with you.

Commissary. The thing is drawn in those terms, and a blank is left for the name, as we did not see her—Come, sign, the lady will make you all agree afterwards.

Valere. I consent to it in that way.

Sganarel. I am very fond of it, for my part :
[Aside.] We shall have fine diversion presently. Here, brother, you have the honour to set your name first.

Aristo. But why all this mystery----

Sganarel. Pox take your impudence! Come, sign your name, you fool.

Aristo. He talks of Isabella, and you of Leonora.

Sganarel. Do not you consent, brother, if it is her, to allow them to make their nuptial promises good?

Aristo. Certainly.

Sganarel. Sign then, and I will do so too.

Aristo. So let it be, I do not understand it.

Sganarel. You shall be informed of the affair.

Commissary. We will be back again soon.

Sganarel to Aristo.] Well, now I will tell you the subtlety of this intrigue.

[They retire to the farther part of the stage.]

SCENE IX.

LEONORA, SGANAREL, ARISTO,
LISSETTA.

LEONORA.

HOW I have been plagued with the impertinence of these young coxcombs!

They obliged me to slip away from the ball privately.

Lisetta. They all endeavoured to make themselves agreeable to you.

Leonora. In short, I never met with any thing more troublesome, and would be much happier in the meanest conversation, than in all their flattering discourses: they imagine all must be given up to their powdered periwigs; they think themselves the wisest people in the world, when, with a stupid bantering tone, they rally one in a silly manner about the love of an old man: but I set more value upon the affections of such an old man, than all the giddy raptures of a young fellow. But I see---

Sganarel to Aristo.] Well, the affair stands in this manner. [seeing Leonora.] O! yonder she comes, attended by her maid.

Aristo. I am not angry, Leonora, but have reason to complain: you are sensible I never laid any restraint upon you, and have a hundred times told you, that you should gratify your own wishes; and notwithstanding this, your heart has engaged itself, both by promise and affection, without my knowledge. I do not repent the indulgence I have given you, but your behaviour affects me sensibly; my fondness for you did not deserve this return.

Leonora. I do not understand the reason of your talking in this manner; but you may be certain I am the same I ever was; nothing can lessen my esteem for you: I should think it a crime to have a regard for any other person, and if you are willing to compleat my wishes, the sacred knot shall make us one to-morrow.

Aristo. Upon what foundation then, brother, came you----

Sganarel. What! have not you come from Valere's lodgings? Have you not been in love with him for a year past, and declared your passion for him this very day?

Leonora. Who has taken the pains to invent such lies, and given you this account of me?

SCENE THE LAST.

ISABELLA, VALERE, LEONORA, ARISTO,
SGANAREL, COMMISSARY, NOTARY,
LISSETTA, ERGASTE.

ISABELLA.

I HOPE, sister, you will forgive me freely, if by the liberty I have taken I may have hurt your character. I was forced into that scandalous contrivance by the confusion the great surprize put me into. Fate deals very differently with you and me. Your example condemns my passion. [to Sganarel.] I will make no apology to you, Sir, as I am doing you a piece of service, rather than using you ill. I found myself unworthy of your love, and chose rather to give myself to another, than prove unworthy of such an heart as yours; heaven never intended us for each other.

Valere to Sganarel.] To receive her from your hands, Sir, is happiness and glory.

Aristo. Indeed, brother, nobody will be sorry for you, though they know you are cheated; your own behaviour is the occasion of it, and you must submit to it peaceably.

Lisetta. This reward of his mistrust is an exemplary stroke, and I am very glad of it.

Leonora. For my part, I cannot blame this stra-

tagem; I do not know whether it should be commended or not.

Ergaste. He is a lucky fellow to escape being a cuckold, when his stars exposed him to the danger of it.

Sganarel. Really I cannot recover myself from my astonishment; this devilish trick confuses my understanding: after this, he that trusts in women is wretched. I believe the devil himself could not be so wicked as this jilt; I thought that I could have engaged my life that she would never have behaved so. Women are continually hatching mischief; they were made for a curse to the world. I give up the treacherous sex, for ever, and wish them all at the devil heartily.

Ergaste. Well said.

Aristo. Let us all go to my house. Come, Mr. Valere, to-morrow we will endeavour to appease his rage.

Lisetta to the audience.

You who churlish husbands know that want mending,

Ours is the school to which you may send them.

T H E E N D.

SO

THE
SCHOOL FOR WIVES.

A
C O M E D Y.

G 5

77

A

Th

ta

ci

aff

th

eff

fa

ed

sh

w

ve

on

ge

pl

in

ly

A

w

tu

ot

st

pa

ec

sp

m

ve

w

fo

*The SCHOOL for WIVES, a Comedy of Five Acts,
acted at Paris, at the Theatre of the Palace-
Royal, December 26th, 1662.*

AT the first representation of the SCHOOL for WIVES, all Paris flocked to Moliere's Theatre; however, the immense number of spectators could not secure him against several criticisms being published against his piece, though it afforded him comfort in it. So inveterate were they against it, that they took notice of the smallest neglects, and exclaimed against the slightest faults; but the most essential of all was overlooked, I mean some dangerous images in it, which should always be banished from the stage. But if we consider only how artfully the piece is contrived, we cannot but confess, that this comedy is one of the most excellent productions of human genius. The repeated confidence which Horace places in the jealous Arnolph, who, notwithstanding all his precautions, was always duped by a silly innocent young girl; the excellent character of Agnes, the humour of the under characters which were chosen to attend her, together with the natural and quick transition from one surprize to another, are excellent comic productions. What distinguishes the SCHOOL for WIVES still more particularly is, that the whole appears to be related, and yet at the same time is all in action; a species of comedy of which neither the ancient nor modern stages have given us the least model. Every relation, by its proximity to the incident which gave occasion to it, traces it over again in so lively a manner, that the spectator thinks him-

self present at it, and by a peculiar advantage which the relation of this piece has over the action, we enjoy the effect which the fact produces, at the same time that we learn it; for the person who is concerned to be instructed learns every thing which there is the greatest reason should be concealed from him. The great resemblance which appears in the *SCHOOL for HUSBANDS* and the *SCHOOL for WIVES*, with regard to Sganarel and Arnolph being both deceived by the very measures they took to prevent it, must turn to Moliere's reputation, who discovered the secret of varying what appeared to be so much alike. The subtil strokes of Isabella, which sprang from no other principle but the constraint her guardian kept her under, are very different from those natural ones of the witty Agnes, who offended against decorums only because Arnolph had kept her in ignorance of them.

A C T O R S.

ARNOLPH, otherwise Mr. de la Souche.

AGNES, daughter to Henriques.

HORACE, lover to Agnes.

CHRISALDUS, Arnolph's confident.

HENRIQUES, brother-in-law to Chrisaldus.

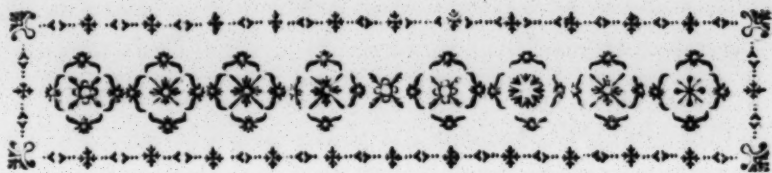
ORONTES, Horace's father, and a friend to Arnolph.

A NOTARY.

ALLEN, a country fellow, Arnolph's man.

GEORGETTA, a country girl, Arnolph's maid.

SCENE PARIS, a square in the suburbs.



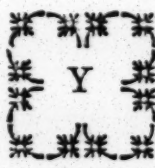
T H E
SCHOOL FOR WIVES.



A C T. I. S C E N E I.

C H R I S A L D U S, A R N O L P H.

C H R I S A L D U S.

OU are come to marry her, you say?

Arnolph. Yes, to-morrow I will finish the affair.

Chrisaldus. We are alone here, and I dare say, may speak freely, without being heard by any body. Would you have me to speak sincerely as a friend? Your intentions make me anxious for you, for I think it a piece of madness in you to marry, in whatever light you may consider it.

Arnolph. I believe it is true, my friend. Probably your own experience makes you apprehensive for me; perhaps your brows make you imagine, that matrimony and horns are inseparable.

Chrisaldus. Accidents of that sort nobody can avoid, and it appears to me very foolish for people

to be so careful about it. My uneasiness for you is on account of the raillery which a thousand husbands indure the sting of. You know very well that every body suffers by your reflexions, and to exclaim against secret intrigues, has been your greatest delight in every place you go.

Arnolph. Very well. Are husbands so tame any where as in this city? We see them of every degree treated at home with disrespect. One heaps up riches, which his wife can dispose of to a person who is endeavouring to make a cuckold of him; another, not less infamous, but more easy, sees his wife accept of presents every day, and is not in the least uneasy, as she tells him it is out of respect for her virtue. One makes a great bustle, which serves but to little purpose: another, quite easy, sees the spark visit at his house, walks out, and lets affairs take their course. One wife, with female cunning, pretends to make a confident of her faithful husband, who sleeps quietly under the delusion, pitying the poor galant for giving himself the trouble—which answers his intentions. Another, to avoid the appearance of extravagance, pretends the money she expends is won at play, and the poor weak husband returns God thanks for it, without suspecting at what game she wins it. In short, you will find these subjects of ridicule every where, and may not I as a looker on laugh at them? May not I amongst our fools——

Chrisaldus. Very true; but he who makes a jest of another, may be afraid of being laughed at himself. I hear what the people say, how they amuse themselves with tattling things that happen; but whatever is discovered in places where I am, no body ever heard me rejoice at them. I am close

enough in that respect; and if I happened on these occasions to think certain degrees of forbearance wrong, and my intention were not to suffer what some husbands bear quietly, yet I never attempted to say this; for after all, it is to be dreaded that satire will come home, and a person should never say positively that he would do so and so, in such a case. By which means, if fate should destine my brows to a disgrace of that sort, my behaviour would induce people to pity me, or, at least, privately to laugh at me. But, my dear friend, your case would differ widely, and I really think you run a very great risk, as you have always been ready to ridicule tame husbands. In short, you have been a devil let loose upon them, and to avoid being a subject of jest, you must walk upright indeed: if they get the smallest hold of you, they will make your shame public, even at the market-crofs. And—

Arnolph. Alas! friend, do not give yourself any trouble about that point. He must be very cunning indeed who catches me. The person I am to marry is so innocent, that my forehead cannot be in any danger. I know all the artful contrivances, and the stratagems they fall upon to plant horns upon us.

Chrisaldus. Hey, what do you pretend? that a fool, in one word——

Arnolph. A person is no fool, to marry an ignorant wife. I believe, as a good christian, your other half to be very wise, but an artful wife is a very bad presage, and I am sensible what certain people have lost by marrying women with great abilities. Shall I plague myself with the care of a witty wife, who loves to talk of nothing but the ring and the drawing room? who can write ten-

der things both in verse and prose? who is visited by the marquises and the wits, while I, under the name of the lady's husband, am like a saint, whom nobody calls upon? No, no, none of your high flown genius's for me; a woman who writes, understands more than she should do. I intend mine with so little of the sublime in her, that she shall be ignorant what rhyme is. If one happen to play at the basket with her, and in one's turn ask her, what is put into it? Let her answer be, a cream-tart. In short, I would chuse to have her very ignorant: to say the truth, it is enough if she can love me, know how to sew, spin, and say her prayers.

Chrifaldus. Then your choice would be a stupid wife?

Arnolph. I would prefer an ugly fool to a handsome wit.

Chrifaldus. And wit——

Arnolph. Virtue is enough.

Chrifaldus. After all, a fool may not know what it is to be virtuous; and I should think it very insipid to live all one's life with a fool. To be serious, even that will not secure one from horns: a sensible woman may deviate from her duty, but she must do it knowingly; whereas a fool, without ever thinking of it, may fail in the common course of her's.

Arnolph. I will answer as Pantagruel did to Panurgus, to this fine argument. Endeavour to prevail upon me to marry a wealthy woman, and talk from January to June, when you are done you will be amazed, that all your advice is to no purpose.

Chrifaldus. I will say no more to you on that subject.

Arnolph. Everyone to his own way. In a wife, as in other things, I will follow my own humour. I have money enough, and can afford to marry a woman that has nothing, whose dependence upon me will prevent her from reproaching me either with her birth or fortune. When I first saw her amongst the children, her grave and mild look inspired me with a love for her, though she was then but four years old. Her mother was in a very low station, and I thought I would beg her from her; and the good woman very readily gave up her charge. I had her brought up at a little convent, according to my own directions, distant from all company. I desired them to use all their endeavours to make her as great an idiot as they could. Thank heaven they succeeded to my wish, and as she grew up, I found her silly, and was thankful for it. I brought her home, but as my house is always open to a hundred sorts of people, (precaution being always necessary) I have her placed out of the way in this other house, that her agreeable disposition may not be spoiled by people who come to visit me: I have no body near her but people as ignorant as herself. You will be surprized at my troubling you with so long a story, but it is to acquaint you with the care I have taken——And I invite you this evening, as a faithful friend, to sup with her: observe her well, and you will certainly approve my choice.

Chrifaldus. I will.

Arnolph. And by this conversation you will judge of both her innocence and person.

Chrifaldus. As to that article, what you have told me cannot——

Arnolph. The description I give you, is even

short of the truth. Her simplicity on all occasions is admirable; I am often like to die with laughing at some questions she asks. The other day, (could you suppose it?) she was uneasy, and with an ignorance which nothing can equal, came to ask me if children come into the world by the ear.

Chrifaldus. It gives me pleasure, Mr. Arnolph—

Arnolph. How! Will you always give me that name?

Chrifaldus. I really cannot avoid it, it comes always into my mouth, and I never think of Mr. de la Souche. What the deuce has put it into your head to change your name, at forty-two years of age; to take a title from an old rotten stump belonging to your farm?

Arnolph. Besides the house being known by that name, la Souche is a more agreeable name to me.

Chrifaldus. It is shameful to give up the name of one's ancestors, to take another founded on fancy; and yet it is the whim of a great many people, without mentioning you. I know a country fellow, named fat Peter, who had only a quarter of an acre of land, he made a muddy ditch round it, and assumed the name of Mr. de L'Isle.

Arnolph. Repeat none of those instances: if you call me by any other name than la Souche, you will disoblige me; I have a pleasure in it, and will be called so.

Chrifaldus. Few people will submit to it, and I still see the directions of your letters——

Arnolph. From those who are not acquainted with it I bear it easily, but for you——

Chrifaldus. Be it so. We shall not differ about

that;
Souche
An
good-
turned
Ch
him a
An
partic
every

A R N

W
will b
ter te
Al
An
Al
Ge
Al
G
Al
Ge
Al
An
am ft
G
A

that; I will accustom myself to say Mr. de la Souche.

Arnolph. Farewel. I knock here only to say good-morrow, and acquaint them that I am returned.

Chrifaldus aside, going away.] Really I think him an accomplished fool.

Arnolph alone.] He is a little touched as to some particular things. It is surprizing to see how much every man is wedded to his own opinion!

[Knocking at his door.] Soho.

S C E N E II.

ARNOLPH, ALLEN and GEORGETTA
in the house.

ALLEN.

WHO is there?

Arnolph. Open the door. [aside.] They will be very well pleased to see me, I suppose, after ten days absence.

Allen. Who knocks?

Arnolph. I.

Allen. Georgetta.

Georgetta. Well.

Allen. Open the door below there.

Georgetta. Do it yourself.

Allen. You go do it.

Georgetta. I will not go, indeed.

Allen. Nor will I go.

Arnolph. A pretty sort of ceremony, while I am standing without!—Soho, soho there; pray—

Georgetta. Who knocks at the door?

Arnolph. Your master.

Georgetta. Allen.

Allen. What do ye say?

Georgetta. It is my master. Open the door immediately.

Allen. Do you open it.

Georgetta. I am blowing the fire.

Allen. I cannot stir, lest my sparrow should get out, and the cat eat it.

Arnolph. Which ever of you two will not open the door, shall not have a bit of victuals for above these four days.

Georgetta. What occasion have you to come, when I am going?

Allen. Why you more than I? A fine contrivance truly!

Georgetta. Stand out of the way.

Allen. I will not, stand you out of the way.

Georgetta. I will open the door.

Allen. And I will open it.

Georgetta. You shall not open it.

Allen. No more shall you.

Georgetta. Nor you.

Arnolph. I had need have great patience here.

Allen entering] However, it is my business, Sir.

Georgetta entering.] I am your servant for that; it is mine.

Allen. Was it not out of respect to my master here, I'd——

Arnolph receiving a blow from Allen.] Plague!

Allen. I beg your pardon.

Arnolph. See that loggerhead there.

Allen. She is so too, Sir——

Arnolph. Hold your tongues, and mind what I am going to say to you. How are all here?

Allen. Why Sir, we we—[Arnolph pulls off

Allen's hat three times.] Sir, we we are——thank God—— we we——

Arnolph. Foolish blockhead, who taught you to talk to me with your hat upon your head?

Allen. You do well, Sir, I was in the wrong.

Arnolph to Allen.] Tell Agnes to come down to me.

S C E N E III.

ARNOLPH, GEORGETTA.

ARNOLPH.

WHEN I was away did she appear melancholy?

Georgetta. Melancholy? No.

Arnolph. No!

Georgetta. Yes, yes.

Arnolph. Why then-----

Georgetta. Yes she was; she expected you every moment, and never a horse, mule, or ass passed by which she did not take for you.

S C E N E IV.

ARNOLPH, AGNES, ALLEN, GEORGETTA.

ARNOLPH.

HER work in her hand is a good sign—— Well, Agnes, are you glad to see me come back again?

Agnes. Yes, Sir, thank heaven.

Arnolph. And I too am glad to see you again.

Your face plainly shews you have been well since I went from home.

Agnes. Fleas have disturbed me very much in the night.

Arnolph. O, in a little time you shall have some body to catch them for you.

Agnes. You will do me a kindness.

Arnolph. So I can easily imagine. What are you about there?

Agnes. I am making myself some head-clothes. Your night-shirts and caps are done.

Arnolph. Very well, go up stairs again, I will be with you presently, and will discourse with you about some affairs of consequence.

SCENE V.

ARNOLPH alone.

THIS modest and virtuous ignorance far surpasses all your knowledge, your romances, your verses, and your love-letters, ye learned ladies, and heroines of the age. One ought not to be tempted by riches; and provided a girl be virtuous——

SCENE VI.

HORACE, ARNOLPH.

ARNOLPH.

WHO is this I see? Is it he?—Ay. I am mistaken. No, no. But it is. Nay, it is he himself. Hor——

Horace. Mr. Ar——

Arnolph. Horace.

Horace. Arnolph.

Arnolph. O, joy extreme! How long have you been here?

Horace. Nine days.

Arnolph. Really——

Horace. As soon as I came I went to your house, but you was not to be found.

Arnolph. I was in the country.

Horace. Ay, you had been gone two days.

Arnolph. What an alteration a few years make in children! I am surprized to find him grown so, after having known him when he was so little.

Horace. You see how it is.

Arnolph. But, pray, how does my dear friend Orontes your father, whom I respect and revere? Is he hearty still? He knows I bear a part in every thing which concerns him; it is four years since we saw each other, and a letter has not passed between us all that time.

Horace. He is even heartier than we are, Mr. Arnolph:—I have got a letter for you from him: but by another since he sends me word of his own coming, though I am yet ignorant of the reason of it.—Do you know who of your townsmen it should be, that is upon his return hither with immense riches, which he has been fourteen years acquiring in the West-Indies?

Arnolph. No. Did you hear his name?

Horace. Henriques.

Arnolph. No.

Horace. My father speaks to me of him and his return, as if I was perfectly acquainted with him; and writes me word they are setting out together upon an important affair, which his letter does not mention.

[Giving Orontes's letter to Arnolph.]

Arnolph. I shall certainly be extremely glad to see him, and will do every thing in my power to entertain him. [After having read the letter.] Letters amongst friends should be less ceremonious; all these compliments are superfluous; you might freely have used my fortune, without his taking the pains to write to me on that score.

Horace. I am one who take people at their word: and I have just now occasion for an hundred pistoles.

Arnolph. Why really you oblige me in making use of me in this manner, and I am glad I have got them ready for you;—take purse and all.

Horace. It must——

Arnolph. Let us talk about something else, and drop this discourse. Well, what do you think of this city?

Horace. Its inhabitants are numerous, its buildings very magnificent, and I believe its diversions admirable.

Arnolph. Every man has his pleasures suitable to his taste; but as for those people, who go under the name of galants, they have all they can desire in this country; for the women are made for coquetry, you will find them of gentle temper, both the fair and the brown, and the husbands are withal the most complaisant creatures you ever saw. It is an entertainment for a king, it is a meer comedy to me to see the pranks I do.—You have perhaps already smitten some-body.—Have you had no luck yet? people formed like you are of more value than gold;—you are of a shape to be a cuckold-maker.

Horace. Why, to tell you the truth, I have had

here a
in frie

Ar
waggi

Ho
to any

Ar
Ho

caſion
ſigns.

is cap
My ſ

much
tance

much
her an

Ar
Ho

charm
houſe

match
all cor

he wo
would

ging,
no he

often
ſuch r

Ar
Ho

or So
He is

wife.
fellow

Ar
Vo

here a certain love adventure, and I am obliged in friendship to acquaint you with it.

Arnolph aside.] Very well, here is some new waggish story to minute down in my pocket-book.

Horace. However, I beg you would not tell it to any body.

Arnolph. Oh!

Horace. You are not ignorant that on these occasions, if a secret gets air it frustrates all our designs. I will freely tell you then, that my heart is captivated by a certain young lady in this city. My small endeavours have immediately had so much success, that I have obtained a free admittance to her; and without boasting of myself too much, or in the least injuring her, my affairs with her are in a mighty good posture.

Arnolph laughing.] Ha, ha, who is it?

Horace pointing to Agnes's lodging.] A very charming young creature, who lives in that brick house there. Simple indeed she is, through the matchless folly of a man who shuts her up from all company; but amidst that ignorance to which he would enslave her, she displays charms that would throw one into raptures; an air most engaging, and I know not what of tenderness, which no heart is proof against. But, perhaps you have often seen this young star of love, adorned with such numberless perfections. Agnes is her name.

Arnolph aside.] Oh! I burst.

Horace. As for the man, it is I think la Zouffe, or Source, that they call him; no matter which. He is rich by what they told me, but not over-wise. They talked to me of him as a ridiculous fellow. Are you acquainted with him?

Arnolph aside.] A bitter pill!

Horace. Why do not you answer?

Arnolph. O, ay—I know him.

Horace. He is a fool, is not he?

Arnolph. Heh—

Horace. How now? what do you say to it? Heh! that means yes. Ridiculously jealous: Fool? I find he is just as I was told. In short, the lovely Agnes has made a conquest of me; to tell you the truth, she is a lovely creature, and it would be a sin to let a beauty so extraordinary remain in the power of this fantastical old fellow. For my part, all my endeavours, all my most passionate wishes are, to make her mine, notwithstanding this jealous wretch; and the money I was so free to borrow of you, is for no other purpose but to bring about this laudable enterprize. You know better than I, that money does every thing in such undertakings; and that it procures the victory in love as well as war. But methinks you do not seem pleased: does my scheme displease you?

Arnolph. No, I was considering—

Horace. You are tired with this conversation: Farewell. I will come presently to your house, to thank you.

Arnolph thinking himself alone.] What! must it—

Horace coming back.] Once more, I beg you would take care, and not let any one know what I have been saying to you.

Arnolph thinking himself alone] What my soul now feels—

Horace coming back.] Especially my father, who would perhaps be angry at it.

Arnolph thinking he will come back again.] Oh!— [alone.] Oh! what have I suffered during

this discourse! never was any body so vexed as I have been! With what imprudence and what extremeness he came to give an account of this business to me myself! Though my other name keeps him in an error, yet did ever any hair-brains run on so furiously? but having suffered so much, I should have been more peaceable, till I had discovered what I have reason to apprehend; I should have encouraged his foolish babbling, by which I might thoroughly have informed myself of what is carrying on privately between them. I will endeavour to join him again, he is not got far, I believe, and get out of him the whole secret of this matter. I tremble for fear of the misfortune that may befall me by so doing; we often seek after what we would not find.

~~~~~

## ACT II. SCENE I.

ARNOLPH.

**M**Y missing the way he went is really very lucky, for I do not think I could have concealed my perturbation of mind, which I am not willing he should know at present. But I am not a man that can put up this matter, and leave the spark at liberty to pursue his design. I am resolved to frustrate it, and be informed how matters have been carried on between them. I take it, that my honour is deeply concerned therein: as the case stands, I consider her as a wife already. I shall be blamed, and no one else, for whatever

she does amiss. O wretched journey! unhappy absence!

[Knocking at the door.]

## SCENE II.

ARNOLPH, ALLEN, GEORGETTA.

ALLEN.

**A**H! Sir, this time—  
Arnolph. Be quiet. Come hither both of ye: That way, that way. Come along, come along, I say.

Georgetta. Ah! you frighten me! my blood runs chill in my veins!

Arnolph. Is this the way you have obeyed me in my absence? and have you both betrayed me by agreement?

Georgetta falling at Arnolph's feet.] Oh! pray, Sir, do not eat me.

Allen aside.] I am certain some mad dog has bit him.

Arnolph aside.] Ugh! I cannot speak I came so fast, I am stifled; would I could throw off all my clothes. [To Allen and Georgetta.] Ye base vipers, you have suffered a man to come then, have ye—What, would you run away?—You must this instant—if you stir— I will have you tell me. Ugh! Ay, I will have you both—S'death! stir not a foot, else I will kill you—How came that man into my house? Heh!—speak, [panting.] make haste, quick, dispatch, in a moment, without considering; will ye tell me?

Allen and Georgetta. Oh! Oh!

Georgetta falling at Arnolph's feet.] I swoon.



Allen falling at Arnolph's feet.] I die.

Arnolph aside.] I am all over in a sweat: Let me breathe a little. I must walk and cool myself. Could I have imagined when I saw him a little one, that he would grow up for this! Heavens! what my heart endures! It would be better I think to draw from her own mouth by kind usage an account of what concerns me. Let me try to moderate my passion. Softly, my heart, be not in such a flutter. [To Allen and Georgetta.] Rise, get ye in, and tell Agnes to come to me. Stay. [Aside.] They will go tell her the uneasiness I am under, and she will be the less surprised. I will fetch her out myself. [To Allen and Georgetta.] Wait here for me.

### S C E N E III.

ALLEN, GEORGETTA.

GEORGETTA.

**W**HAT a frightful look he has! I never saw a man appear so terrible.

Allen. That gentleman has angered him, I told you so.

Georgetta. I cannot imagine what makes him conceal our young lady so much, and will not let her see any company.

Allen. It is because this affair makes him jealous.

Georgetta. But how comes this fancy into his head?

Allen. It comes—it comes, because he is jealous.

Georgetta. Ay; but what makes him so? and why this passion?

Allen. It is because jealousy . . . do ye understand me right, Georgetta? is a thing—which makes people uneasy—and drives them all round the house. I will give you a comparifon, that you may conceive it better. Now tell me fincerely, when you have got a mefs of porridge, if fome greedy gut fhould come to eat it from you, would it not vex you, and make you ready to beat him?

Georgetta. Ah, I understand that.

Allen. It is juft in the fame manner. Woman really is a man's porridge; and when a man fees other people endeavouring to dip their fingers in his porridge, he flies immediately into a rage.

Georgetta. Ay; but why does not every body do fo alike? What is the reafon that fome husbands appear pleafed, when their wives are in company with fine gentlemen?

Allen. Because every body has not this gluttenous love, that would keep all to itfelf.

Georgetta. If my eyes are not dazzled, I fee him coming.

Allen. Your eyes are good: it is he,

Georgetta. Obferve how penfive he is.

Allen. He is very much vexed juft now.

#### S C E N E IV.

ARNOLPH, ALLEN, GEORGETTA.

ARNOLPH *afide*.

**T**HE emperor Augustus was told by a certain Greek, as a maxim equally reafonable

and useful, that when we happened to be put in a passion by any accident, we should first of all repeat the alphabet; that in the mean while our anger may abate, and we may do nothing which we ought not to do. I have pursued this advice with regard to Agnes, and I have brought her on purpose hither, under pretence of taking a walk, in order that the suspicions of my disordered mind may artfully bring this discourse about so as to dive into her heart, and clear up the matter gently.

## S C E N E V.

ARNOLPH, AGNES, ALLEN, GEORGETTA.

ARNOLPH.

**C**OME, Agnes. [To Allen and Georgetta.]  
Get ye in.

## S C E N E VI.

ARNOLPH, AGNES.

ARNOLPH.

**I**T is fine walking.

Agnes. Very fine.

Arnolph. A delightful day!

Agnes. Indeed it is.

Arnolph. What news have ye?

Agnes. The little cat is dead.

Arnolph. That is a great pity; but we are all mortal, and every one for himself. Had you any rain when I was in the country?

Agnes. No.

Arnolph. Were you not tired?



Agnes. I never am tired.

Arnolph. But what have you employed yourself with these nine or ten days?

Agnes. I have made six shirts, I think, and likewise six caps.

Arnolph having mused a while.] This is a strange world we live in, my dear Agnes. Observe how scandalous people are! I have been told by some of the neighbours, that when I was from home, you suffered a young man to come to my house, to see and talk with you. But I gave no credit to these slandering tongues, and would have laid a wager it was false—

Agnes. Lack-a-day, do not lay, you will certainly lose.

Arnolph. What! was there really a man—

Agnes. It was really so. He scarce stirred out of our house, I will swear.

Arnolph aside.] That she is not in jest, this sincere declaration plainly shews. [Aloud.] But, methinks, Agnes, if I remember right, I forbid your seeing any body.

Agnes. Yes: but although I saw him, you are ignorant of the reason of it. Had you been in my place, you would certainly have done the same.

Arnolph. That may be; but, in short, tell me how this matter was.

Agnes. It is very amazing, and I dare say you will hardly believe it. As I was working in the balcony one fine day, I saw a well-made young man pass along under the tree just by, who observing that I looked at him, immediately bowed to me very respectfully: I, in civility, not to be behind hand with him, returned him a courtfy. He soon bowed to me again, I took care to make him

another curtsy: and he bowing to me a third time, I also answered with a third curtsy. He walked to and fro, making me every time the handsomest bow imaginable, and I, who looked at him earnestly all the while, made him as many curtsies: so that if night had not come on, I should still have continued in that manner, being unwilling to give over, or to lie under the dissatisfaction of having him imagine, that I was not so complaisant as he.

Arnolph. Very well:

Agnes. The next day, as I was standing at the door, there came an old woman up to me, who thus spoke: May heaven long preserve thee in all thy beauty, my child, and pour forth its blessings upon thee! Because it has made thee so lovely, thou art not therefore to misemploy its gifts; know therefore, that thou hast wounded an heart, which now is obliged to complain of it.

Arnolph aside.] Ah! agent of the devil! damned cursed jade!

Agnes. I! have I wounded any body? replied I; very much surprized. Wounded! Ay, thou hast wounded him indeed, cries she; and it is the gentleman thou sawest from the balcony yesterday. Alas! says I, how could I possibly do it? Did I throw any thing down upon him carelessly? No, replies she, thine eyes have given the fatal stroke, and all his hurt proceeds from their glances. Alas! says I, you surprize me much; can my eyes hurt any body? Ay, daughter, cries she, thine eyes have a deadly poison in them which thou dost not know of. In a word, the poor wretch is languishing away, and if so be, continues the charitable old woman, thy cruelty refuses him assistance, he will

be a dead man in two days time. Bless me! I should be very sorry for it, says I; but what assistance does he require of me! my child, cries she, he only requests the happiness of seeing thee, and talking to thee: thine eyes alone are able to prevent his ruin, and remedy the mischief they have produced. Good lack! says I, with all my heart, and since it is so, he may come and see me as often as he chuses.

Arnolph aside.] O cursed forcerefs! may hell reward thy charitable wiles!

Agnes. He therefore came, saw me, and was cured. Do not you yourself think now, that I acted but reasonably in doing so? and after all, could I have the conscience to let him die for want of help? I who am so full of pity for those that suffer, that I cannot forbear crying when a chicken dies?

Arnolph aside softly.] All this is only the effect of an innocent mind; and I must blame my own indiscreet absence for it, which left this perfect goodness exposed to the designs of artful seducers, without any adviser. I fear the rascal, by his impudent pretences, has carried the matter somewhat beyond a jest.

Agnes. What is the matter? methinks you are a little out of humour. Is it that I did amiss in what I told you?

Arnolph. No. But tell me what followed upon this interview, and in what manner the young man behaved in his visits.

Agnes. Lack-a-day! did you but know how he was transported, how soon his illness left him when he saw me, the present he has made me of a fine casket, and the money our Allen and George get-



ta have had of him, you would certainly be in love with him, and say as we do.

Arnolph. Well, but when you was alone with him, what did he do?

Agnes. He said he loved me with an unequalled passion, and told me in the finest language in the world, things that nothing ever can come up to; the agreeableness whereof delighted me every time I heard him speak, and raised within me a certain inexpressible emotion, with which I was vastly delighted.

Arnolph aside.] O tormenting enquiry into a fatal secret, where the enquirer only suffers all the pain! [Aloud.] Besides all this talk, all these pretty ways, did not he kiss you too?

Agnes. Yes he did, most lovingly! he took my hands and arms, and was never weary of kissing them.

Arnolph. Did he take nothing else from you, Agnes? [Seeing her at a loss.] Hah!

Agnes. Why, he did—

Arnolph. What?

Agnes. Take—

Arnolph. How!

Agnes. The—

Arnolph. What do you mean?

Agnes. I dare not tell you; for perhaps you will be angry with me.

Arnolph. No, I will not.

Agnes. Yes but you will.

Arnolph. Indeed I will not.

Agnes. Swear faith then.

Arnolph. Well, faith.

Agnes. He took—You will be in a passion.

Arnolph. No.

Agnes. Yes.

Arnolph. No, no, no, no: What the deuce do you mean? What did he take from you?

Agnes. He——

Arnolph aside.] I suffer damnation.

Agnes. Well then, to tell you the truth, he took away the ribbon you gave me, but I could not help it.

Arnolph recovering himself.] No matter for the ribbon. But I want to know whether he did nothing but kiss your hands.

Agnes. Why! do people do other things?

Arnolph. No, no. But did not he desire of you some other remedy to cure the disorder he said had seized him?

Agnes. He did not, but if he had, I should have given any thing to do him good.

Arnolph aside.] Heaven's goodness be praised, I am come cheaply off. If I fall into the like mistake again, I will consent to be ill used. [Aloud.] Peace, it is an effect of your innocence, Agnes: I will say no more of it: What is done is done. I am sensible that by flattering you, the spark only wants to impose upon you, and afterwards to laugh at you.

Agnes. Oh, no, he told me so above twenty times.

Arnolph. You ought not to believe him. It is committing a great sin to accept of caskets, and hearken to those powdered beaux, to suffer them, in a languishing tone, to kiss your hands and charm your heart in this manner.

Agnes. Do you call it a sin? For what reason, pray?

Arnolph. For what reason? Why the reason is,

because it is declared that heaven is offended at such doings.

Agnes. Offended! But why should it be offended? Alas! it is so sweet, so pleasant! I admire at the delight one finds in it, and was ignorant of these things before.

Arnolph. Ay, there is a great deal of pleasure in all these tenderneſſes, theſe complaiſant diſcourſes, theſe fond embraces; but they ſhould be taſted in an honeſt manner, and the ſin ſhould be taken away by marrying.

Agnes. After one is married is it not a ſin?

Arnolph. No.

Agnes. Then, pray, marry me immediately.

Arnolph. If you deſire it, I deſire it too, and came back on purpoſe to marry you.

Agnes. Did you really?

Arnolph. Yes.

Agnes. How glad you will make me!

Arnolph. Ay, I do not queſtion but matrimony will pleaſe you.

Agnes. Will you have us two——

Arnolph. Nothing more certain.

Agnes. If it be ſo, I ſhall embrace you.

Arnolph. And I ſhall do the ſame by you.

Agnes. For my part, I do not underſtand when people are in jeſt. Do you ſpeak ſeriouſly?

Arnolph. Ay, you ſhall ſee I do.

Agnes. We ſhall be married then?

Arnolph. Yes.

Agnes. But when?

Arnolph. This very evening.

Agnes, laughing.] This very evening?

Arnolph. This very evening. Are you glad at it?



Agnes. Yes.

Arnolph. It is my desire to see you happy.

Agnes. I am very much obliged to you: what satisfaction shall I enjoy with him!

Arnolph. With whom?

Agnes. With—him there.

Arnolph. Him there — I do not talk of him there; you are a little forward, methinks, to choose an husband. In a word, it is another body I have got ready for you; and as for that gentleman there, I intend, by your favour, (even though the malady he amuses you with should kill him) that henceforward you shall break off all acquaintance with him: that when he comes to the house, your compliment shall be civilly to shut the door upon him, and if he knocks, throw a stone at him out of the window, and oblige him in good earnest never to come there again. Do you understand me, Agnes? I will lie concealed in a corner, and observe how you behave.

Agnes. Alack! he is so genteel, it is—

Arnolph. Heh! what a speech!

Agnes. I shall not have the heart---

Arnolph. No more disputing. Go up stairs.

Agnes. Will you really---

Arnolph. Hold your tongue; I am master, therefore you shall obey.



## A C T III. S C E N E I.

ARNOLPH, AGNES, ALLEN,  
GEORGETTA.

ARNOLPH.

**B**Y following my directions, you have confounded the handsome seducer; in short, every thing has succeeded to my wishes, and I am vastly pleased. This it is to have a discreet adviser: your innocence, Agnes, had been insnared; and see what a condition you would have been in, before you were aware of it. You were running directly on in the high road to hell and destruction, had not I set you right. The ways of these sparks are but too well known; they have fine stockings, ribbons and feathers in abundance, large wigs, good teeth, and a smooth tongue; but I assure you, there is a cloven foot underneath, and they are devils in reality, whose voracious appetite endeavours to make a prey of female honour. However, this time, thanks to the care that has been taken, you are escaped with your virtue. The air wherewith I saw you throw that stone at him, which has rendered all his designs hopeless, makes me still more resolved not to delay the marriage, for which I told you to prepare yourself. But it is proper, first of all, to have a little talk with you, that may be to your advantage. [to Georgetta and Allen.] Bring out a chair hither. If you ever——

Georgetta. We will remember all your instruc

tions perfectly: The other gentleman there imposed upon us: But----

Allen. May I die, if ever he get in again. Besides, he is a blockhead, he gave us two crown pieces the other day that were not weight.

Arnolph. Get what I ordered for supper, and as for our contract which I spoke of, let one of you fetch the Notary hither, that lives at the corner of the market-place.

## S C E N E II.

ARNOLPH, AGNES.

ARNOLPH sitting.

**L**AY aside your work, Agnes, and pay attention to what I am going to say to you: hold up your head, and look at me whilst I am speaking, and be sure remember every thing I say to you. I intend to marry you, Agnes, and you ought an hundred times a-day to bless your happy fate, to remind yourself of the pitiful condition you were in, and at the same time to admire my goodness, which raises you from the mean station of a poor country-wench to the honourable rank of a citizen's wife; to enjoy both the bed and the embraces of a man who has shunned all such engagements, and whose heart has refused the honour it will do you, to twenty people very capable of pleasing. You ought, I say, continually to remind yourself how insignificant you would be without this glorious alliance, to the intent that consideration may the better teach you to deserve the station I shall place you in, and make you always know yourself, so that I may never repent of what I do.



Matrimony, Agnes, is not a trifling thing; severe duties are required of a wife; and I do not design to exalt you to that condition, for you to be a Libertine and to take your pleasure. Your sex is merely dependant in that state, the whole power is on the husband's side; though they are two parts of the same body, yet those two parts are far from being equal; one is the superior part, and the other the subordinate; the one is in all cases subject to the other that governs: and that obedience which the well-disciplined soldier shews to his general, the servant to his master, a child to his father, or the lowest monk to his superior, comes even very short of the tractableness, the submission, the humility, and the profound veneration which a wife should have for her husband, her chief, her lord and master. When he looks seriously upon her she should turn her eyes immediately upon the ground, and never presume to look him in the face, till he favours her with a gracious glance. Our wives, in this age, are ignorant of this, but be not you corrupted by the example of other people. Beware of imitating those foolish jilts, whose pranks are talked of all the city over; and do not let the devil tempt you, that is to say, hearken to no young coxcomb. Consider, Agnes, that by making you part of myself, I give you up my honour, which honour is tender, and easily offended; that there is no trifling on such an occasion as this, and that in hell there are boiling cauldrons wherein wives that live wickedly are plunged for ever and ever. These are not foolish stories which I am telling you, and these lessons should be imprinted in your heart. If you practise them sincerely, and avoid being a coquette, your soul will be always as white and

spotless as the lily, but if you forfeit your honour, it will become as black as a coal; you will appear as a terrible monster to every body, and in time you will be the devil's property, and boil in hell to all eternity, from which I heartily pray you may be preserved. Make a curtsy. As a probationer in a convent must know her duty by heart, so she that marries should do the very same: and I have a writing of great importance in my pocket, which will teach you the duty of a wife. Some good body has wrote it, who is now unknown, and I would have you study it constantly. [He gets up.] Hold: Let's see if you can read and understand it. [Agnes reads.

MAXIMS of WEDLOCK, or the duties of a married woman; together with her daily exercise.

#### I. M A X I M.

"**T**HE woman who intends to be married  
 "ought to remember, that the man who  
 "takes her, takes her only for himself, notwithstanding the vast numbers of admirers which other women have in these our days.

Arnolph. I shall explain to you what that means; but for the present let us only read.

[Agnes goes on.

#### II. M A X I M.

"She ought to consult her husband about her  
 "dress; it being for him alone she should take care  
 "of her beauty, and be regardless whether other  
 "people think her handsome or not.

## III. M A X I M.

“ She must lay aside the practice of ogling, and  
“ must use no paints, pomatums, beauty-washes,  
“ nor the numberless ingredients that are made  
“ use of to set off the complexion. These are  
“ always mortal poisons to honour, and the pains  
“ bestowed to appear beautiful are seldom for  
“ the husband’s sake.

## IV. M A X I M.

“ When she goes abroad, she ought, as honour  
“ requires, to prevent the wounds her eyes might  
“ give, by concealing them under her hood: for  
“ she should study to please her husband, and no  
“ one else.

## V. M A X I M.

“ Decency prohibits her from receiving any  
“ friends whatever, except such as come to see her  
“ husband: those people of gallantry that have no  
“ business but with the wife, are very disagreea-  
“ ble to the husband.

## VI. M A X I M.

“ She must not accept any presents from men,  
“ for they always expect some favour in return.

## VII. M A X I M.

“ Amongst her moveables she must have neither  
“ scrutoir, ink, paper, nor pens. The husband, ac-



“ cording to good custom, should write all that is  
 “ written in his family.

## VIII. M A X I M.

“ She should not go to those disorderly societies  
 “ called assemblies, which tend to corrupt wo-  
 “ men’s mind; for at these places they invent the  
 “ deepest plots against their husbands.

## IX. M A X I M.

“ If a woman intends to preserve her honour,  
 “ she must shun gaming as a terrible thing; for  
 “ play is very bewitching, and often drives a wo-  
 “ man to the last stake.

## X. M A X I M.

“ She must never go to public walks, nor ac-  
 “ cept of treats in the country, for it is thought  
 “ the husband generally is at the expence of such  
 “ jaunts.”

Arnolph. You may read the rest of it when a-  
 lone, and by-and-by I will explain these matters  
 to you, as they should be, line by line. I have a  
 little affair come into my head, it is only to speak  
 a word, and I shall not tarry long. Go in, and  
 take a special care of that book. If the Notary  
 comes, tell him to wait till I come.

**T**H  
 better t  
 escaped  
 over in  
 failings  
 such fo  
 people  
 they cl  
 them r  
 a witty  
 only;  
 she is  
 case, p  
 dicule  
 and fir  
 in orde  
 labour  
 man i  
 has fi  
 must  
 people  
 derbur  
 with v  
 comm  
 on of  
 a secr  
 them,  
 than  
 strong

## S C E N E III.

A R N O L P H alone.

**T**HIS girl is so pliant in my hands, that I can turn her any way, therefore I cannot do better than make her my wife. I very narrowly escaped being choused in my absence through her over innocence; but to say the truth, one's wife's failings had much better be from that cause; for such sort of mistakes are easily amended. Simple people pay great attention to their advisers, and if they chance to be deceived, a word or two will put them right again. But it is quite otherwise with a witty wife; our fate depends on her judgment only; nothing can divert her from pursuing what she is once set upon, and all our precepts, in this case, prove abortive. Her wit enables her to ridicule our maxims, to make virtues of her faults, and find out ways of deceiving the most dexterous, in order to bring about her wicked designs. We labour in vain to turn aside the blow; a witty woman is a plague in intrigue, and after her caprice has silently passed sentence on our honour, it must be submitted to. A great many honest people are able to declare as much. But my blunderbuss shall find no cause to laugh; he has met with what he deserves for tattling. This is the common fault of our countrymen, in the possession of good fortune they are never easy, while it is a secret, and this senseless vanity is so valuable to them, that they would rather lose their happiness than not talk of it. Sure the devil must be very strong in women when they choose such rattle-

pates! and——But here he comes: let me be upon my guard, and discover how greatly he is mortified.

# SCENE IV.

HORACE, ARNOLPH.

HORACE.

**I** Have just been at your house, where fate seems resolved I should never meet with you; but I will go so often, that some moment at last shall---

Arnolph. Pray use not these silly compliments, than which nothing is more tiresome to me, and could I prevail, all manner of ceremony should be wholly laid aside. It is a wretched custom, wherein most people waste two parts in three of their time. Let us leave it off then without any more ado. [Puts on his hat.] Well, as to your love intrigue, Mr. Horace, may I be informed how you go on in it? I was taken off before by some business that came into my head, but I have been considering of it since: I admire the quick progress you have made at the beginning, and am solicitous for the event.

Horace. My passion has been unfortunate, Sir, since I discovered it to you.

Arnolph. Ay! how so?

Horace. The master of my fair one is unhappily returned from the country.

Arnolph. What a misfortune!

Horace. And besides, to my very great sorrow, he knows what has passed in private between us two.



Arnolph. How the deuce could he learn this affair so soon?

Horace. I really cannot tell, but so it really is. At my usual hour, I went to the house to see her, when both the man and maid, with a voice and countenance quite altered from what they used to be, opposed my entrance, and shut the door to my face with a Get you gone, you are troublesome.

Arnolph. The door to your face!

Horace. To my face.

Arnolph. That is a little hard.

Horace. I would have talked to them through the door, but to all that I could say their answer was, You shall not come in, my master has forbid it.

Arnolph. Did they not let you in then?

Horace. No. And Agnes confirmed her master's return to me from the window, by bidding me be gone in a very angry tone, and throwing a stone at me.

Arnolph. How! a stone?

Horace. A stone that was none of the least neither, by which with her own hand she received my visit.

Arnolph. The devil! These are no jokes: your affair is in no very flourishing way.

Horace. Very true, this return of his has greatly hurt me.

Arnolph. Really I am sorry for you, I protest I am.

Horace. This man breaks all my measures.

Arnolph. Ay, but that is nothing; you will find a way of setting yourself to rights again.

Horace. I must endeavour by some intelligence to baffle the strict vigilance of her jealous master.

Arnolph. You will easily do that, for when all is done the girl loves you.

Horace. I really believe she does.

Arnolph. You will bring matters to bear.

Horace. I hope so.

Arnolph. That stone has perplexed you, but you should not be astonished at it.

Horace. That's certain, for I presently discovered that my rival was there, and managed the whole affair without being seen in it. But what surprized me, and what you will wonder at, was another accident I am going to tell you of, a bold stroke of the lovely girl, which one would not have expected from her simplicity. Love, it must be owned, is a skilful master; he teaches us to be what we never were before, and frequently an intire alteration in our manners becomes by his lessons only a moment's work. He breaks through the obstacles of nature in us, and his sudden effects have the appearance of miracles. A coward is by him in an instant rendered courageous, a miser liberal, and a churl obliging; he inspires the greatest blockhead with wisdom, and makes him capable of doing every thing. Agnes is a surprizing instance of this, for snapping me up in these very words, Get you gone, I am resolved never to see you more. I know all you have to say, and there is my answer. This stone, or this pebble, at which you would wonder, fell down with a letter at my feet; and what I admire is to find this letter adapted exactly to the meaning of her words, and the stone she threw. Are not you surprized at such an action as this? Does not love know the art of quickening the understanding? And can it be denied that his powerful flames have won-

derf  
all t  
not  
com  
has  
A  
H  
laug  
man  
my p  
I me  
frigh  
is im  
instr  
utmo  
his r  
diffic  
forbe  
and r  
A  
don,  
H  
frien  
heart  
good  
in a  
expre  
A  
your  
intent  
H  
" but  
" som  
" be  
" the  
Vo

derful effects upon the mind? What do ye say to all this? What think ye of the letter? Heh! do not you admire this crafty contrivance? Is not it comical to observe what a part my jealous rival has been acting with all this foolery? Are not—

Arnolph. Ay, very comical.

Horace. Why, I think, it does not make you laugh. [Arnolph forces a laugh.] This military man, who fortifies himself in his own house against my passion, and seems provided with stones, as tho' I meant to enter by storm, who in a whimsical fright encourages all his servants to drive me away, is imposed upon before his face, even by his own instrument, by her whom he would keep in the utmost ignorance. I confess, for my part, though his return has thrown my affair under a very great difficulty, I think it is so very droll that I cannot forbear laughing whenever it comes into my head, and methinks you do not laugh at it enough.

Arnolph with a forced laugh.] I beg your pardon, I laugh at it as much as I am able.

Horace. But I must shew you her letter as a friend, in which she has writ down all that her heart felt, in terms so affecting, so perfectly full of goodness, of innocent tenderness and sincerity! in a word, in the very manner that pure nature expresses the first wound love gives.

Arnolph aside.] This is the consequence of your writing, you gypsey: it was contrary to my intention that you was taught it.

Horace reads.] “I have a mind to write to you, “but I know not where I shall begin. I have “some thoughts which I am desirous you should “be acquainted with; but I am at a loss how tell “them you, and distrust my want of words. As



" I begin to understand that I have always been  
 " kept in ignorance, I am afraid of writing some-  
 " thing that would be wrong, or saying more than  
 " I should do. I do not know what you have  
 " done to me, but I find that I am ready to die  
 " with vexation for what I am forced to do against  
 " you, that it would give me all the uneasiness in  
 " the world to lose you, and that I should be great-  
 " ly delighted to be yours. There is harm, per-  
 " haps, in saying so, but really I cannot forbear,  
 " though I wish it could have been brought about,  
 " and no harm had been in it. I am informed,  
 " that all young men are false, that what they say  
 " must not be minded, and that every thing you  
 " tell me is only to deceive me: But I assure you,  
 " I cannot yet imagine that of you, and I am so  
 " affected by your words, that I do not know how  
 " to believe they are lies. Tell me generously  
 " if they be; for as I am devoid of any ill de-  
 " sign, you would do the greatest injury in the  
 " world should you deceive me, and I believe the  
 " vexation of it would kill me.

Arnolph aside.] Um, Bitch!

Horace. What do ye say?

Arnolph. I? Nothing I only coughed.

Horace. Did you ever see more tenderness of  
 expression? notwithstanding all the cursed endea-  
 vours of unreasonable power, is it possible to find a  
 better natural capacity? and is not it certainly a  
 mortal sin villainously to spoil such an admirable ge-  
 nius? to be desirous of obscuring the brightness  
 of such a mind in ignorance and stupidity? But  
 love has begun to pull off the mask; and if by the  
 favour of some lucky star I can be able to deal with

this  
 this  
 A  
 H  
 A  
 affair  
 Ho  
 in the  
 this l  
 usual  
 sions  
 to wa  
 just n  
 be fo  
 man  
 say th  
 servio  
 ago th  
 some  
 AI  
 witho  
 Ho  
 I put

W  
 so mu  
 ed to l  
 foul su  
 letter  
 corrup

this mere animal, this blockhead, this scoundrel, this brute----

Arnolph. Good bye to ye.

Horace. Why in such a hurry?

Arnolph. I have just thought of an important affair, which----

Horace. Can you not tell me of any body (as you live in the neighbourhood) that could get admittance into this house? I make free with you, and it is not unusual for friends to serve one another on such occasions. At present I have no body in it but people to watch me; the man and maid both, as I found just now, in spite of all that I could do, would not be so civil as to hear me. I had a certain old woman in my interest for some time, of a genius, to say the truth, more than human. She was very serviceable to me at the beginning; but four days ago the poor woman died. Cannot you put me in some way?

Arnolph. No, really; you will find out some without me.

Horace. Farewel then. You see what confidence I put in you.

## SCENE V.

ARNOLPH alone.

**W**HAT a restraint I am obliged to put upon myself before him! What! a simpleton have so much ready wit! such the hussy has pretended to be in my sight. How the deuce has her soul sucked in this subtilty? After all, that fatal letter is the death of me. I find the villain has corrupted her mind, and has fixed himself there

in my place: This gives me despair and mortal pain. I suffer doubly by being robbed of her heart, for thereby love is injured as well as honour. It distracts me to see my prudent measures defeated, and my place usurped. I am sensible that to punish her guilty passion, I need only leave her to her evil destiny, and that she herself would revenge me upon herself; but to be deprived of the thing one loves is terrible. Heavens! after making use of so much philosophy in my choice, why must I be so mightily bewitched by her charms? She is destitute of parents, friends, and money; she abuses my care, my favours, my tenderness; and yet I love her, even after this base affair, so much that I am unable to throw off this fondness. Fool! hast thou no shame? Oh I burst! I am mad, and I could tear myself in pieces. I will step in a little, but only to see how she looks after so enormous a crime. Heaven grant that my brows may be free from dishonour! but if it is decreed that I must suffer it, bestow upon me at least that fortitude which some people are endowed with to bear such accidents!



# ACT IV. SCENE I.

ARNOLPH.

**W**herever I go my mind distracts me, it is greatly perplexed how to manage things both within doors and without, so as to frustrate the designs of this young fop. With what effrontery did the traitress bear the sight of me! what she has done does not in the least concern her; and

thou  
grav  
not  
com  
and  
hear  
I wa  
appe  
were  
spire  
it wa  
dign  
up fo  
taken  
ed th  
ing  
fond  
hair-  
come  
that  
heave  
no:  
proje  
hopes  
at mo

O  
A  
what



though she has brought me within an inch of the grave, one would swear, to look at her, that she had not the least hand in it. The more she appeared composed when I saw her, the more was I vexed, and those boiling transports which inflamed my heart, seemed only to redouble my ardent passion. I was incensed against her, and yet I never saw her appear so beautiful; her eyes, methought, never were before so piercing, never did they before inspire me with such violent desires: and I perceive it would kill me should my evil destiny bring this disgrace upon me. What? Have I brought her up so tenderly, and with so much care? Have I taken her to me from her infancy? Have I indulged the fondest hopes? Must I build upon her growing charms? And during thirteen years have I fondled her to be my own, as I imagined, for an hair-brained youth whom she is in love with to come and run away with her before my face, and that even when she is half married to me? No, by heavens, my foolish young friend; by heavens, no: you must be a cunning fellow to overturn my project; or else by my faith, I shall render all your hopes abortive, and you will find no cause to laugh at me.

## S C E N E II.

A NOTARY, ARNOLPH.

NOTARY.

**O** There he is! Good-morrow to ye: I am ready to draw up the contract as you desire.

Arnolph not perceiving or hearing him.] In what manner must it be done?

Notary. It must be done in the usual form.

Arnolph not perceiving him.] I will use all possible precaution.

Notary. I will do nothing contrary to your interest.

Arnolph not perceiving him.] I must guard against any surprize.

Notary. It is enough that your affairs are put into my hands. You must by no means sign the contract before you receive the portion, for fear of being cheated.

Arnolph not perceiving him.] I am afraid, should I make the least discovery, it would become a public town-talk.

Notary. But it is very easy to prevent a discovery; your contract may be transacted privately.

Arnolph not perceiving him.] But how shall I settle the point with her?

Notary. The jointure should be in proportion to the fortune she brings you.

Arnolph not perceiving him.] I love her, and that love is the greatest difficulty I labour under.

Notary. In that case the wife may have so much the more.

Arnolph not perceiving him.] How to behave to her on such an occasion?

Notary. The law says, the husband that is to be shall settle upon the wife that is to be the third part of her portion; but the law signifies nothing at all, you may do a great deal more than that if you have a mind to it.

Arnolph not perceiving him. If-----

[Seeing the Notary.

Notary. As for the presents to be made, let them agree together. I say the husband that is to

he may give the wife that is to be what jointure he chuses.

Arnolph. Heh!

Notary. He may give her so much and more, if he loves her greatly, and is desirous to oblige her, and that by way of jointure or settlement as they call it, to be left and go away intirely to the right heirs of the said wife that is to be, upon her decease; or else according to the statute, as people have a mind; or as a gift, by a deed in form, which may be made either single or mutual. Wherefore do you shrug? Do not I talk very learnedly? Do you think that I do not understand the manner of a contract? Who is it can teach me? No body, I presume. Do not I know that when they are married they have in law an equal right to all moveables, monies, immoveables and acquisitions, unless they give it up by an act of renunciation? Do not I know that a third part of the portion of the wife that is to be, becomes in common, for——

Arnolph. I do not in the least doubt but that you know all this; but no body is talking to you about it.

Notary. Why, do you seem to take me for a fool, by shrugging up your shoulders, and making faces at me?

Arnolph. Pox take the fellow with his puppy's face. Adieu, that is the way to make you hold your peace.

Notary. Was not I fetched hither to draw up a contract?

Arnolph. Yes, I sent for you; but the affair is put off, and I will send for you again when the



time is fixed. What a noise the fellow makes!  
Notary alone.] I dare say the man is mad.

## S C E N E III.

NOTARY, ALLEN, GEORGETTA.

NOTARY.

**D**ID you come to fetch me to your master?  
Allen. Yes.

Notary. I do not know what you may take him  
for, but go and tell him from me, that he is a mad  
fool.

Georgetta. We shall not fail to do it.

## S C E N E IV.

ARNOLPH, ALLEN, GEORGETTA.

ALLEN.

**S**IR,———  
Arnolph. Come hither, you are my trusty,  
my good, my real friends, and I have some news  
for you.

Allen. The Notary———

Arnolph. No matter, some other time for that.  
A wicked design is contrived against my honour;  
and what a disgrace would it be for you, children,  
to have your master robbed of his honour? After  
that you would not dare to appear in any place, for  
whoever sees you would point at you. Therefore,  
since the affair concerns you as much as me, you  
must take such care, for your part, that this gallant  
may not———

Georgetta. You have taught us our lesson al-  
ready.

Arnolph. But beware of paying the least attention to his sly speeches.

Allen. O! to be sure.——

Georgetta. We know how to deny him.

Arnolph. Suppose he should come now in a coaxing manner; Allen, my dear heart, cheer up my drooping spirits by a little of your assistance.

Allen. You are a blockhead.

Arnolph. Right. [To Georgetta.] Georgetta, my pretty-face, you seem so sweet-tempered, and so good a body.

Georgetta. You are an oaf.

Arnolph. Right. [To Allen.] Do you think there is the least harm in an honest and virtuous design?

Allen. You are a villain.

Arnolph. Very well. [To Georgetta.] I shall certainly die, if you take no pity on the pains I suffer.

Georgetta. You are a fool, an impudent rascal.

Arnolph. Mighty good. [To Allen.] I am not a person that desires something for nothing; I know how to remember services that are done me: However, Allen, there is somewhat to make you drink before-hand; and there is to buy you some ribbons, Georgetta. [Both hold out their hands and take the money.] This is only an earnest of my kindness; and all the favour I request of you is only to let me see your handsome mistress.

Georgetta pushing him.] None of your tricks upon us.

Arnolph. That is good.

Allen pushing him.] Begone.

Arnolph. Right.

Georgetta pushing him.] Immediately.

Arnolph. Very well. Hold, enough.

Georgetta. Do not I do right?

Allen. Is this the way you would have us behave to him?

Arnolph. Yes, you do extremely well, except as to the money, which you must not take.

Georgetta. We did not think of that.

Allen. Would you have us begin again just now?

Arnolph. No; it is enough, go in both of you.

Allen. You need only speak.

Arnolph. No, I tell you, go in when I desire you. You may keep the money; go, I will come to you again; look circumspectly to every thing, and second my endeavours.

## SCENE V.

ARNOLPH alone.

**T**HIS spark shall be mighty cunning indeed, if he can now get either letter or message conveyed to her. I will get the cobbler who lives at the corner of our street to be a spy for me. I intend never to let her out of doors, and will banish all milliners, tire-women, and glove-makers, who make it their constant custom to help on love-intrigues. I who understand matters, and have seen the world, know all the tricks of it.

## SCENE VI.

HORACE, ARNOLPH,

HORACE.

**I**HAVE just now made a very narrow escape, and am very glad to find you here. Just after I saw you last, I unexpectedly saw Agnes all alone



in the balcony, enjoying the fresh air. After having made me a sign, she came down and let me in by the garden door. But I was hardly in her chamber, before she heard her watchful Argus upon the stairs; upon which she shut me up in a closet which luckily happened to be in the room. He came into the room immediately: I did not see him, but I heard him walk to and fro at a great rate, without uttering one syllable, but sighing grievously now and then, and sometimes giving great thumps upon the table, beating a little dog that fawned upon him, and overturning every thing that came in his way; he broke in his passion the very flower-pots with which the fair one had set out her chimney; and without doubt the trick she has played must have come to his ear. At last, after having by twenty such tricks discharged his fury on things that could not help it, he without saying what made him uneasy, left the chamber, and I my prison. We durst not venture to stay together any longer for fear of somebody, it would have been running too great a risque: But she is to admit me into her chamber to-night, when it is late; the sign for her to know me is to be three hems, and then the window will be opened, out of which Agnes is to put a ladder, whereby I will enter. This I tell to you as my only friend: Joy increases by being revealed; and should one taste the most consummate joys an hundred times over, it would not be satisfactory unless it were known by some-body. You will take part, I believe, in the success of my affairs. Farewell, I am going about some other business just now.

## S C E N E VII.

A R N O L P H alone.

**A**M I never to be at rest, but be constantly persecuted by my evil destiny? Is my vigilance and wisdom to be for ever defeated? And am I always to be the sport of this simple wench and raw-brained fop? I have been contemplating the wretched fate of married men for these twenty years and upwards, and have carefully informed myself of all the accidents whereby the most wary are distressed: I have profited by the disgraces of others, and have endeavoured to secure my brows from all affronts, and prevent their being like other foreheads, it being my intent to marry: For this noble purpose I thought I had made use of every project that could be thought of, but cruel fate seems to have decreed that no mortal should be exempted from it; after all the light and experience that I could possibly gain in these matters; after more than twenty years studying how to conduct myself cautiously through the whole affair, have I acted contrary to the practice of so many husbands, to find myself in the very same condition as they are? Ah! cruel destiny, thou hast proved false! I am still in possession of the desired object; and if her heart is stolen from me by this unlucky spark, I will prevent him however from seizing any thing else, and they shall not spend this night so agreeably as they imagine. This blunderer, by entrusting his secret with me, puts it in my power to defeat all his projects, which is however some small comfort.

## S C E N E VIII.

CHRISALDUS, ARNOLPH.

CHRISALDUS.

**W**ELL, shall we sup before we walk?

Arnolph. No, I do not intend to take any supper to-night.

Chrisaldus. Pray what is the reason of this?

Arnolph. I have a reason for it.

Chrisaldus. Is not the wedding you resolved upon to be performed?

Arnolph. You interfere too much in other people's affairs.

Chrisaldus. How sharp you are! I suppose you have been crossed in your love-affair.

Arnolph. Let what will befall me, I shall at least have the advantage of being unlike certain people, who peaceably suffer galants to make their visits.

Chrisaldus. It is very odd, that you should always take fright upon this affair, that you should place your sovereign happiness in this, and imagine no other kind of honour in the world: To be a miser, a villain, a bully, and coward, is nothing in your opinion, compared with this blot; and in whatsoever manner a man may have lived, he is a man of honour if he is not a cuckold. To speak seriously, what makes you think that all our glory is dependent on such an accident? And that a virtuous mind has any thing to reproach itself for the injustice of a vicious one which it could not help? Why will you, I say, imagine that in marrying one deserves either praise or blame for the



choice one makes, and form a most horrible monster of the affront that is done one by a wife's falshood? Be persuaded that a man of honour need not be so frightened at cuckoldom; that none being secure from the strokes of fortune, this accident should be thought in itself indifferent; and in a word, that all the harm of it, let the world pretend what it will, lies only in the manner of our bearing it. To behave well under these difficulties, one must, as well as in all others, avoid extremes: not be like those over-good natured people, who, proud of such affairs, are continually bringing galants to visit their wives, and telling their good qualifications to every one; who appear exactly of their humour, come to all their treats and meetings, make every one wonder at their having the assurance to shew their faces there. This way of acting is certainly highly blameable, but the other extreme is not less so. As I do not approve of such as are friends to their wives' galants, I am no more for those violent people whose indiscreet resentment, full of rage and fury, draws the eyes of every one upon them by its noise, and who, by the bustle they make, appear unwilling that any body should be ignorant what they are. There is a medium between these two extremes, where a wise man stops upon such an occasion: when a body knows how to take it, there is no cause to be ashamed for the worst a wife can do. In a word, people may say of it what they please, but it may be easily made to appear not so frightful, and, as I told you before, all the dexterity lies in knowing how to turn the fair side outwards.

Arnolph. The whole fraternity ought to return you thanks for this excellent speech, and any be-

ly that hears you speak must rejoice to find himself enrolled amongst the number.

Chrifaldus. I do not say that, for it is what I blame: but as a wife is the gift of fortune, one should do, I say, as at dice, where if what you expect do not come up, you must make use of dexterity and temper to amend your luck by good conduct.

Arnolph. That is to say, always eat and sleep quietly, and persuade yourself it signifies just nothing.

Chrifaldus. You think to make a jest of it: but in my opinion there are a hundred things worse than this accident which you dread so much. If I were forced to make my choice, I would rather chuse to be one of that fraternity you so much despise, than to be married to one of these modest women whose perverseness makes a quarrel out of nothing: those dragons of virtue, those honest she-devils, pique themselves continually upon their wise conduct, who, because they do not do us a slight injury, take upon them to behave haughtily, and expect from their being true to us, that we should bear every thing from them.—Let me tell you, friend Arnolph, once again, that cuckoldom is really nothing but what one makes it, that it is even desirable on some accounts, and that it, as well as other things, has its pleasures.

Arnolph. If you are of a temper to be contented under it, I have not the least inclination to experience it for my part, and rather than submit to such a thing——

Chrifaldus. Swear not, I beseech you, for fear of being perjured. If fate ordains it so, your pre-

cautions are all to no purpose; you will not be consulted about the matter.

Arnolph. Shall I be a cuckold?

Chrifaldus. You are grievously hurt: A thousand people are so, without disparagement to you, who for person, courage, wealth, and family, would be affronted to be compared with you.

Arnolph. For my part, I shall make no comparisons with them: But, in one word, this railery is foolish, let us have done with it, if you please.

Chrifaldus. You are at present enraged, therefore I bid you adieu for the present: but remember, whatever your honour may make you imagine as to this affair, that it is being half what we were talking of, to swear you will not be so.

Arnolph. I swear it again, and will go immediately and endeavour to prevent this misfortune.

[Goes to knock at his door.]

## S C E N E IX.

ARNOLPH, ALLEN, GEORGETTA.

ARNOLPH.

**N**OW is the time, my friends, that I beg you would assist me. I really believe you have a regard for me, but now you must make it appear; if you are honest and faithful you may be certain of a reward. The young spark intends to trick me this very night, and get by a ladder into Agnes's chamber, but pray keep it very secret; we three must lay a trap for him. Each of you must be ready with a good heavy club, and when he is almost at the top of the ladder, (for I will o-



pen the window at the nick of time) both of you must fall upon him in such a manner, that his back may be sure to make him remember it, and teach him never to come there again. However, do not mention me at all, nor make any appearance of my being behind. Will you have the courage to execute my resentment?

Allen. If he is only to be thrashed, Sir, depend upon us, you shall see whether I strike with a dead man's arm or not.

Georgetta. 'Tho' mine seems not so strong, in thrashing him it shall not be lazy.

Arnolph. Go you in then, and above all things, be careful of speaking about it. [alone.] This is a useful lesson for my neighbour, and there would not be so many cuckolds, if every husband was to give his wife's galant the same reception.



## ACT V. SCENE I.

ARNOLPH, ALLEN, GEORGETTA.

ARNOLPH.

**W**HO commanded you to beat him in that manner, wretches? you have murdered him.

Allen. We followed your directions, Sir.

Arnolph. I ordered you to beat his back, but not to murder him, therefore it is in vain for you to make that excuse. Heavens! into what a condition has fortune now reduced me! what can I think of doing, to see the man dead? Get into the house, and be sure you say not a word of the innocent order.

I gave you. [alone.] It will soon be light, and I will go ask advice how I shall manage this affair. Alas! what will become of me? And what will the father say, when he comes to know of this fatal misfortune?

## S C E N E II.

ARNOLPH, HORACE.

HORACE *aside*.

**I** MUST go ask who it is.

Arnolph thinking himself alone.] It was impossible to foresee——[being run against by Horace.] Who is there pray?

Horace. Is it you, Mr. Arnolph?

Arnolph. Yes, but who are you?——

Horace. I was going to your house to beg a favour of you. You are very soon abroad this morning.

Arnolph *low aside*.] Surprising! Is it an enchantment? Is it a vision?

Horace. To say the truth, I have been very much troubled, and I thank heaven's great goodness for meeting you here thus luckily. I am going to tell you how every thing has succeeded even much better than I could have expected, and that too by an accident which might have ruined all. I do not know how the assignation we had made could possibly come to be suspected; but just as I was got to the window I saw some people appear, who striking furiously at me, made my feet slip, and I tumbled to the ground: which fall, at the expence of a bruise, saved me from a hearty drubbing. These people, (amongst whom my jealous-pate, I suppose,

was one) imagined my fall to be occasioned by the force of their blows; and as my pain made me lie a considerable time motionless on the spot, they really thought I was dead; which immediately alarmed them all. I heard their noise with a profound silence; they accused one another of the violence, and complaining of their hard fate, came softly, without any light, to feel if I was dead. It being very dark, I easily assumed the appearance of a dead man. They went away very much terrified: and as I was considering how to get off, young Agnes, whom my pretended death had frightened, came to me in great concern: (For she had heard what the people said to one another, and being less observed during all this fray, she easily slipped out of the house.) But finding I was not hurt, she was greatly delighted. What shall I say more to you? At last this amiable fair one has followed the dictates of her love, and being unwilling to go home any more, has committed herself intirely to my trust. You may find a little by this harmless proceeding, how much the gross impertinence of a fool exposes her, and what danger she might have been in, had I a less sincere regard for her; but my heart burns with too pure a flame, and I would rather die than injure her. I see charms in her which are worthy of a happier fate, and nothing but death shall part us. I foresee my father's anger, but we shall find a time to appease his wrath. I yield to her tender charms, and in short, we must please ourselves in life: The favour, therefore, I would beg of you, (relying on your secrecy and sincerity) is, that I may put her into your hands, and that you will so far assist my passion, as to conceal her in your house for a day or two at least.



For, besides that, her going off should be kept an intire secret, to prevent any certain pursuit after her; you are sensible that a girl of her beauty would be strangely suspected in the company of a young man; and as I have disclosed the whole secret of my passion to you, being well assured of your prudence, so I can entrust this valuable prize to no friend so sincere as you.

Arnolph. You may be assured that I am wholly devoted to your service.

Horace. And will you do me this kind office?

Arnolph. Very readily, I assure you; I am overjoyed at this opportunity of serving you, and thank heaven for giving it me. Never did any thing afford me more pleasure.

Horace. How greatly am I indebted to you for your goodness! I was afraid you would make a difficulty of doing it; but you know the world, and your wisdom can excuse the heat of youth. She is at the corner of this street, with one of my servants.

Arnolph. But it now begins to grow light, how shall we manage? Perhaps I shall be seen if I take her here, and the servants will tattle if you should come to my house. Therefore, to be safe, she must be brought to me in some darker place. I will go stay for her in my alley, it is very convenient.

Horace. It is very right to use these precautions; for my part, I shall do no more than put her into your hands, and then get me home immediately without saying any thing.

Arnolph alone.] All the mischief thou hast done me, cruel fortune! is repaired by this single accident.

[Throws his cloke over his face,

## S C E N E III.

AGNES, HORACE, ARNOLPH.

HORACE to Agnes.

I AM carrying you to a very safe lodging, therefore be not in the least uneasy; it would ruin all for you to be with me. Go in at this door, and he will conduct you.

[Arnolph takes her hand without her knowing him.

Agnes to Horace.] Wherefore do you leave me?

Horace. Dear Agnes, it must be so.

Agnes. Pray then do not stay long, but come back as soon as possible.

Horace. I will return to you immediately.

Agnes. I feel no joy but when you are present.

Horace. I too am melancholy when you are out of my sight.

Agnes. Alack! If that was true, you would not leave me now.

Horace. What! can you doubt of my excessive love?

Agnes. Nay, you do not love me so much as I love you. [Arnolph pulls her.] Oh! you pull me too hard.

Horace. Dear Agnes, that is because it is not safe for us two to be seen here; and this faithful friend who pulls you so, is prudently zealous for our service.

Agnes. But to follow a stranger, who——

Horace. Fear nothing, you cannot be in better hands.

Agnes. I should think myself much better in Horace's; and I should——[To Arnolph, who pulls her again.] Stay a little.

Horace. The day drives me away. Adieu.

Agnes. When shall I see you then?

Horace. Very soon, you may be certain:

Agnes. How uneasy I shall be till that time comes!

Horace. My happiness now, thank heaven, is secure, and I may sleep safely.

#### S C E N E IV.

ARNOLPH, AGNES.

ARNOLPH concealed under his cloke, and altering his voice.

**C**OME along, I have prepared a lodging elsewhere for you, and you shall not stay here; I intend to put you in a place where you may be safe enough. [Discovering himself.] Do you know me?

Agnes knowing him.] Hah!

Arnolph. You are frightened, I think, hussy, at seeing me, and are undoubtedly very much displeased at finding me here: I have very luckily interrupted the love-contrivances you have in your head. [Agnes looks if she cannot see Horace.] Think not that your eyes can call back your spark to your assistance, he is gone too far for that. Ha! ha! so young, and yet to play these pranks! Your extraordinary seeming ignorance enquired if children were produced at the ear, though you are not ignorant how to make assignations by night, and steal away very silently to run after a galant. Odsbobs,



how flippant your tongue was with him! sure you must have been at some rare school: Pray who has taught you all this so suddenly? You are no longer it seems afraid of ghosts? This galant has given you courage in the night-time. Ah! baggage, to arrive at this deceit! to form such a design, regardless of all my kindness: Thou art a little serpent that I have warmed in my bosom, which when it comes to its feeling, ungratefully tries to kill him who preserved its life.

Agnes. Why do ye scold at me?

Arnolph. I am very much to blame, indeed.

Agnes. I do not know any harm in all this that I have done.

Arnolph. Is not running after a galant a scandalous action?

Agnes. It is a man that says he will take me for his wife. I followed your directions; for you told me one must marry to take away the guilt.

Arnolph. Ay, but I intended to make you my own wife, and methinks I let you know my meaning plain enough.

Agnes. Yes, but to tell you the truth, I love him better than you; matrimony with you is a troublesome uneasy thing, and you give a frightful description of it; but alack-a-day! he represents it so delightful, that it makes one have a mind to be married.

Arnolph. Ah! traitress! that is because you love him.

Agnes. Really I do love him.

Arnolph. And have you the impudence to tell me so?

Agnes. Why may not I say so, if it is true?

Arnolph. Ought you to love him, impertinence?

Agnes. Alas! can I help it? He only is the cause of it; I did not think of it till it was over.

Arnolph. But you should have discarded that amorous desire.

Agnes. How can a body discard what is delightful?

Arnolph. And are you ignorant that I am displeased at it?

Agnes. Not at all; What harm can it do you?

Arnolph. Very true, I have reason to be glad at it. You do not love me then at this rate?

Agnes. You!

Arnolph. Ay,

Agnes. Indeed I do not

Arnolph. How! no?

Agnes. Would you have me tell you a falsehood?

Arnolph. What is the reason that you do not love me, madam impudence?

Agnes. Lack-a-day, you should not blame me! Why did not you make yourself beloved as he did? If I hindered you, it was without my knowledge.

Arnolph. I endeavoured it all I could, but my pains were in vain.

Agnes. Then he understands it better than you do, for he made me love him without the least pains.

Arnolph aside.] Observe how the slut answers and argues! None of your witty ladies could have said more. Ah! I did not well know her, or else, by my faith, in these cases a simple woman understands more than the wisest man. [To Agnes.] Since you are so good at reasoning, Mrs. Chop-Logick, is there any reason why I should maintain you so long a time at my own charge for him?

Agnes. No, he will repay you every thing:

Arnolph aside.] She hits upon certain words which give me double vexation. [To Agnes.] Is he able, gypsey, to repay me the obligations you have to me?

Agnes. I have no such great ones as you think.

Arnolph. Is it nothing to take care of your education from your childhood?

Agnes: You have been at great pains about that matter truly, and have caused me to be bravely instructed in every thing. Do ye imagine I flatter myself so far as not to know in my own mind that I am intirely ignorant? I am ashamed of it myself, and at this age will not pass any longer for a fool, if I can help it.

Arnolph. You despise ignorance, and are resolved, whatever it costs, to learn something of your galant?

Agnes. To be sure. He has taught me what I do know, and I think myself more obliged to him than you.

Arnolph. I cannot tell what should prevent me from revenging this fancy language with my fist. I am distracted at the sight of her provoking coldness, and beating her would be a satisfaction to me.

Agnes. If that will please you, you are very welcome to do it.

Arnolph aside.] That speech and that look disarm my rage, and produce a return of tenderness which effaces all her guilt. What strange effects does love produce! and how weak do men make themselves appear, for these gypsies! Every body knows their imperfection; they are nothing but extravagance and indiscretion; their mind is wicked and their understanding weak; nothing is more



frail, nothing more unsteady, nothing more false, and yet for all that one does the greatest absurdities for their sake. [To Agnes.] Well, let us make peace: Go, thou little rogue, I forgive thee every thing, and now am fond of thee again: Learn by this how much I love thee, and seeing I am so good, love thou me in return.

Agnes. I would very willingly oblige you, if it was in my power.

Arnolph. My dear life, thou canst if thou wouldst. Do but hear that amorous sigh, behold this dying look, view my person, and lay all thoughts aside of this young coxcomb, and the love he offers thee. He must certainly have put some spell upon thee, and thou wilt be a hundred times more happy with me. Thou delightest in being fine and gay, and I protest thou shalt always be so. I shall be fondling thee continually; I shall hug thee, and kiss thee. Thou shalt do everything thou chusest, which is saying all that can be said without coming to particulars. [Aside.] How far will my passion go? [Aloud.] Nothing really can be equal to my love. What proof of it wouldst thou have me give thee, ungrateful wench? Wouldst thou behold me weep? Wouldst thou have me beat myself? Wouldst thou have me tear off my hair? Wouldst thou have me murder myself? Ay; say if thou wouldst have me do it; I am intirely ready, cruel creature, to convince thee of my love.

Agnes. Hold; I am not in the least affected at all you say; Horace with two words would have wrought upon me more than you.

Arnolph. Heh! this is too great an insult, provoking my rage too far: I will pursue my design,

you  
imm  
ses,  
ter,

I  
A  
chan  
her.  
go g  
conv  
be fu  
It is  
her  
town

V  
I nev  
wrest  
saw  
made  
bout  
nupti

you untractable brute, and pack you out of town immediately. You vex me, and reject my addresses, but depend upon it, if you do not behave better, I will send you to a convent.

## S C E N E V.

ARNOLPH, AGNES, ALLEN.

ALLEN.

**I** Know not how it is, Sir, but methought the dead corps and Agnes went away together.

Arnolph. Here she is: Go confine her in my chamber. [Aside.] He will not come there to seek her. Besides, it is only for half an hour. I will go get a coach, that I may secure her in a more convenient place. Fasten yourselves in well, and be sure do not let her be out of sight. [Alone.] It is some comfort to me, that I can easily turn her head from this love-affair, when she is out of town.

## S C E N E VI.

HORACE, ARNOLPH,

HORACE.

**W**HAT woeful news have I now to tell you, dear friend! Fate is determined that I never shall be happy, and is going again to wrest my beloved Agnes from me. I just now saw my father arrive, who tells me that he has made a match for me, without writing me a word about it, and is come to this place to celebrate the nuptials. You are sensible what a great disap-

pointment this is to me. That Henriques of whom I spoke to you yesterday is come with my father, and it is to his daughter that they intend to marry me. I almost fainted when I first heard it, and not caring to hear any more of it, (as my father talked of coming to see you) I hastened hither beforehand, very much perplexed. Do not tell him a word, I beg of you, of my engagement, which might incense him; and endeavour to dissuade him from this fresh engagement, for no one's words have greater power over him than yours.

Arnolph. I shall do all in my power.

Horace. Advise him to put it off a little, and as a friend, assist my passion in this particular.

Arnolph. I really shall use my utmost endeavours.

Horace. My hopes are all in you.

Arnolph. Very well.

Horace. I look upon you as my real father. Tell him that my age—But here he comes; hear the reasons I can furnish you with.

## SCENE VII.

HENRIQUES, ORANTES, CHRISALDUS,  
HORACE, ARNOLPH.

Horace and Arnolph retire to a corner of the stage,  
and whisper.

HENRIQUES to Chrisaldus.

**H**AD I not been told who you were, I should have known you: I recollected your amiable sister's features, whom the sacred ties of wedlock once united to me; what pleasure should I



Now have had, in bringing her to see all our friends, after our numberless calamities! but cruel heaven denies me that delight, and has robbed me of her sweet company: Let us therefore endeavour to be contented with the only fruit that remains of our loves. You are very nearly concerned in it, and to dispose of this pledge without your consent would be very wrong. The choice of Orontes's son is in itself honourable, but you must be pleased in the choice as well as me.

Chrisfaldus. It is having a bad opinion of my judgment, to doubt my approbation of so reasonable a choice.

Arnolph aside to Horace.] Ay, I will serve you in the best manner.

Horace aside to Arnolph.] But beware of one thing—

Arnolph to Horace.] Be under no concern.

[Arnolph quits Horace to embrace Orontes.]

Orontes to Arnolph.] O! how full of tenderness is this embrace!

Arnolph. What pleasure it gives me to see you!

Orontes. I am come hither—

Arnolph. I already know it.

Orontes. Have you been informed already?

Arnolph. Yes.

Orontes. So much the better.

Arnolph. Your son hates this match, and his heart being pre-engaged looks upon it as a misfortune: He even desired me to dissuade you from it; and for my part, all the advice I can give you is to exert the authority of a father, and not let the marriage be deferred. Young people should be governed with an high hand, they are frequently spoiled by being indulgent to them.

Horace aside.] Oh! Traitor!

Chrifaldus. If it is against his inclination, I think we should not force him. My brother, I believe, will be of the same way of thinking.

Arnolph. What! will he suffer his son to govern him? Would you have a father be so weak as not to know how to make youth obey him? To see him receiving laws at this time of life from one who ought to receive them from him, would be mighty pretty. No, no, he is my intimate friend, and his honour is mine, his promise is given, and he must perform it. Let him now shew his resolution, and force his son's affections.

Orontes. You say right, and to what regards this match, I will be answerable for my son's obedience.

Chrifaldus to Arnolph] You surprize me greatly by being so eager for this match, and I cannot conceive why——

Arnolph. I know what I know, and speak what I ought to speak.

Orontes. Ay, ay, Mr. Arnolph, he is—

Chrifaldus. He is displeased at that name, it is Mr. de la Souche, as you have been told already.

Arnolph. It does not signify.

Horace aside.] What is this I hear?

Arnolph turning towards Horace.] Ay, there lies the secret, and you may judge what I ought to do.

Horace aside.] Into what uneasiness——

## S C E N E VIII.

HENRIQUES, ORONTES, CHRISALDUS,  
HORACE, ARNOLPH, GEORGETTA.

GEORGETTA.

**A**GNES says she will run all hazardsto make her escape, Sir, and will perhaps throw herself out at the window, if you do not come and help us to keep her.

Arnolph. Bring her to me, for I intend to take her away from hence immediately. [To Horace.] Do not you be troubled at it, continual good fortune would make a man proud, and every dog has his day, as the proverb says.

Horace. Never was any body so unfortunate as I am!

Arnolph to Orontes.] Hasten the day of the ceremony? I beg it may be so, and invite myself to it already.

Orontes. That is my real intention.

## S C E N E IX.

AGNES, ORONTES, HENRIQUES, AR-  
NOLPH, HORACE, CHRISALDUS, AL-  
LEN, GEORGETTA.

ARNOLPH to Agnes.

**C**OME here; my pretty girl, come here, you who will have your own way, and cannot be managed; here is your spark, you may make him a submissive courtly, by way of amends. [To Horace.] Farewel, the affair has not turned out



according to our wishes, but lovers are not all lucky.

Agnes. Horace, do you allow me to be forced away in this manner?

Horace. My grief is so great, I am insensible.

Arnolph. Come along, with your chit-chat, come along.

Agnes. I will stay here.

Orontes. Explain this mystery to us; we stare one at another without being able to understand it.

Arnolph. I will tell you at a more convenient time. Your servant.

Orontes. Where do you intend to go to? You do not inform us of what we want to know.

Arnolph. I have advised you to conclude the match in spite of his repining.

Orontes. But in order to conclude it (if you have been told all) did they not tell you that the person who we mean is in your house just now, and is the daughter of the charming Angelica, which she had secretly by Mr. Henriques? What could be the subject of your conversation just now?

Chrifaldus. His behaviour surprized me too.

Arnolph. How?

Chrifaldus. My sister had one daughter by a private marriage, which was unknown to the whole family.

Orontes. And for the sake of keeping it secret, her husband put it out to nurse in the country, under a feigned name.

Chrifaldus. And at that time he was so unfortunate as to be obliged to leave his native country.

Orontes. And in foreign countries to undergo a great many dangers.

Chrifaldus. What he was deprived of at home

by villainy and envy, he has gained abroad by his own industry.

Orontes. When he returned to France, his first care was to make enquiry after the person who had the care of his daughter.

Chrisaldus. He was informed by the country woman, that you got her into your possession, when she was but four years old.

Orontes. As she was very poor, and you of a charitable disposition, she gave up the child.

Chrisaldus. And he has brought the woman here, to his great joy.

Orontes. In a little time she will be here to clear up the matter.

Chrisaldus to Arnolph.] I have a tolerable good guess how you must be mortified by this, but fortune is kind to you; and, as to avoid being a cuckold is your very great happiness, you are sure to attain it by avoiding matrimony.

Arnolph turning away in a great fury, and unable to speak.

Ah!

## SCENE THE LAST.

HENRIQUES, ORONTES, CHRISALDUS,  
AGNES, HORACE.

ORONTES.

**W**HAT makes him run away without speaking?

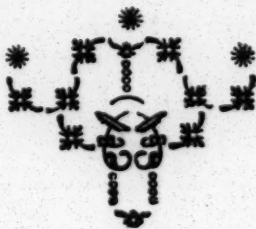
Horace. I will acquaint you with the whole of this odd affair. Father, the same thing which your prudence intended for this lovely girl, is come to pass by accident; the tender ties of mutual love

engaged me strictly. She is the very person you came in search of, and I thought you would have been disobliged at my refusal, on her account.

Henriques. From the first minute I saw her, I had not the smallest doubt of it. From that time my heart has yearned after her. Oh, my daughter ! I yield to such tender transports.

Chrifaldus. With all my heart, I could do so, brother, as well as you; but let us go into the house to clear up matters, this is not a proper place; let us discharge the obligations we owe our friend, and return thanks to heaven, which orders every thing for the best.

T H E E N D.





you  
have  
er, I  
time  
ugh-  
o fo,  
the  
ace;  
end,  
very

THE  
SCHOOL FOR WIVES  
CRITICISED.  
A  
COMEDY.



*The S  
of  
Ro*

**T**  
wife  
repre  
nor w  
at lea  
brou  
Wiv  
prop  
of ne  
alway  
write  
of pe  
from  
Paris  
of, to  
by co  
mon  
seems  
choic  
censu  
perha  
make  
best v  
Coun  
Hote  
he fo



*The SCHOOL for WIVES CRITICISED, a Comedy  
of One Act, acted at the Theatre of the Palace-  
Royal the 1st of June 1663.*

**T**HE criticisms upon the comedy of the SCHOOL for WIVES were for a long time no otherwise opposed by Moliere, than by the continued representations of it, which were always crowded, nor was he at the least pains to suppress them, in part at least, till the month of June, 1663, when he brought out his comedy of the SCHOOL for WIVES CRITICISED. The subject seemed only proper for a dissertation, and of course admitted of neither intrigue nor catastrophe: But the author always kept in view the object which a comic writer should never lose sight of, in whatever kind of performances he brings on the stage. He knew, from what had passed in the polite assemblies of Paris, whilst the SCHOOL for WIVES was talked of, to draw a faithful picture of one part of civil life, by copying the language and character of the common conversations of the people of fashion. He seems to have had it as much in view, by his choice of ridiculous characters, to satirize his censurers, as to apologize for his piece: seduced perhaps by the tendency of human spleen, which makes people think, that by attacking others is the best way to defend themselves. Boursalt played the Counter-Critick, or the Painter's Picture, at the Hotel de Bourgogne, at the same time, in which he followed Moliere's plan and manner, but went



too far in supposing a known key to the SCHOOL  
for WIVES, which pointed out the originals copied  
from nature.

# A C T O R S.

URANIA.

ELIZA.

CLIMENE.

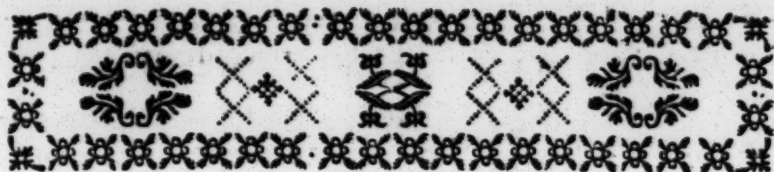
THE MARQUIS.

DORANTES, or the KNIGHT.

LYSIDAS, a Poet.

GALOPIN, a Footman.

SCENE PARIS, in Urania's house.



THE  
SCHOOL FOR WIVES  
CRITICISED.

---

SCENE I.

URANIA, ELIZA.

URANIA.

~~WHAT~~ ~~W~~ ~~H~~ ~~A~~ ~~T~~, is there nobody come to visit you,  
~~W~~ ~~H~~ ~~A~~ ~~T~~ cousin?

~~W~~ ~~H~~ ~~A~~ ~~T~~ Eliza. Not a creature.

~~W~~ ~~H~~ ~~A~~ ~~T~~ Urania. Indeed I am amazed that  
none of us have had company to-day.

Eliza. I am surprized too; it is not common,  
as all the faunterers about court generally resort  
to your house.

Urania. I confess the afternoon appears long to  
me.

Eliza. And very short to me.

Urania. It is common, cousin, for solitude to be  
agreeable to fine wits.

Eliza. Your humble servant; you are sensible I do not affect to be a wit.

Urania. I own, for my part, I love company.

Eliza. Company is agreeable to me too, but only a select party; the many tiresome visits one is obliged to endure amongst your other sorts makes me admire solitude.

Urania. Your delicacy is too great to be fond of select company only.

Eliza. I think it is too great complaisance to be equally fond of all company.

Urania. The extravagant divert me, and reasonable people give me pleasure.

Eliza. Really, extravagant people are seldom entertaining after the second visit, their company soon grows tiresome. But let us talk on that head; will you not rid me of your trifling Marquis? Do you suppose that I shall always hold out against his continual jokes?

Urania. It is a fashionable language at court, which they make themselves merry with.

Eliza. It is bad for those who do so, and rack their brains all the day to converse in this stupid jargon. A pretty thing to bring into the conversation of the Louvre, your double entendres, raked together from the kennels of Halles and Place Maubert! A fine manner of jesting for courtiers, and of a man's shewing his wit by coming and saying: Madam, you are at the Place Royal, and all the world sees you three leagues from Paris; for every body sees you with a good eye; because Bonneuil is a village at three leagues distant from hence! Is it not very gallant, and very witty? And have not they who hit upon these pretty puns, reason to be proud of them?

Uran  
this as  
affect

Eliz  
things  
them r  
know  
joking

Ur  
fair, i  
is lon  
Eli

C

U  
E

your

U

C

here

U

C

U

you

C

U

der

C

the



Urania. They do not, at the same time, speak this as a piece of wit, for most of those people who affect this language know that it is ridiculous.

Eliza. It is still worse to study to repeat silly things, and to be sorry jesters on purpose. I think them much less excusable on that account, and I know very well to what I would condemn these joking gentlemen.

Urania. Come, let us have done with this affair, it warms you too much. I think Dorantes is long in coming to sup with us.

Eliza. He may have forgot it probably, and—

## S C E N E II.

GALOPIN, URANIA, ELIZA.

GALOPIN.

**C**CLIMENE is come to pay you a visit, Madam.

Urania. Oh! bless me! what a visit is this!

Eliza. In this manner heaven punishes you for your dislike of retirement.

Urania. Haste and tell her that I am from home.

Galopin. She is informed already that you are here.

Urania. Who was so silly as to tell her that?

Galopin. I, madam.

Urania. The devil is in the boy; I shall teach you to give answers before I am acquainted with it.

Galopin. Madam, I will go and contradict it.

Urania. Hold, you little fool, as you have blundered, let her come up stairs.

Galopin. She is still conversing with a man in the street.

Urania. Oh! cousin, how this visit perplexes me just now!

Eliza. Really the woman is excessively troublesome: I always hated her, and looked upon her as one of the stupidest persons that ever pretended to common sense.

Urania. The epithet is rather strong.

Elvira. In justice she deserves this and more, I never saw a person so affected.

Urania. Yet she would seem quite the reverse.

Elvira. Indeed she would appear otherwise, but she is so formal, that her whole body seems as if it were out of joint; her head, hips and shoulders appear as if they went by clock-work. She affects a languishing manner of speaking, rolls her eyes to make them appear large, and draws up her mouth to make it look small.

Urania. Hush! what if she should hear you thus--

Eliza. No, no, she is not so near. Well do I remember the evening that she wanted to see Damon, on account of his reputation, and the things he has published! You are acquainted with the man, and how indolent he is in keeping up a conversation. She gave him an invitation to sup, with half a dozen other people, imagining he would entertain them with his wit; but never did he appear so simple; the company expected that he would divert them by his jests, and that he had so much wit as to make extemporaneous repartees upon every thing that was said, and even not to call for any thing but with a witticism; but his silence surprised them, and he gave the lady as little pleasure as she gave me.

Urania. Be silent. I will go to the room-door and receive her.

Eliza. Hear one word more. What an admirable union it would be between a she-coxcomb and a jester! I wish she were married to him.

Urania. Here she comes; be silent.

S C E N E III.

CLIMENE, URANIA, ELIZA, GALOPIN.

URANIA.

**I**T is very late indeed that—

Climene. Order a chair directly, for God's sake.

Urania to Galopin.] Make haste, and bring an armed chair here.

Climene. Oh! Heavens!

Urania. What is the matter then?

Climene. I can support no longer.

Urania. What is the matter with you?

Climene. I faint.

Urania. Are you seized with vapours?

Climene. No.

Urania. Shall I unlace you?

Climene. O no. Oh!

Urania. What is your illness? and when were you seized?

Climene. I came from court three hours ago, and was ill then.

Urania. How?

Climene. I have been punished for my sins, by being present at the performing of that vile rhapsody, the School for Wives. It occasioned me a fainting fit, which I have not yet recovered, nor shall I be well these two weeks.

Eliza. We get illnesses without expecting them.



Urania. My cousin and I must be of very different constitutions from you, as we saw the same piece performed the day before yesterday, and both came home merry and well.

Climene. Have you seen it?

Urania. Yes, and heard it from beginning to end.

Climene. My dear, did it not throw you into fits?

Urania. Thank God I am not so delicate, and I really think this play should rather mend people, than make them sick.

Climene. Bless me! what do you say? will a person who has the least share of sense, advance this proposition? Can any person, with impunity, quarrel with reason, as you do? And can there really be a mind so famished for drollery, as to taste the silly things this play is made up of? I really could not find the least grain of sense in it: children by the ear, had, to my thinking, a detestable gout: the cream tart turned my stomach; and I thought I should have thrown up all the porridge.

Eliza. Heavens! most elegantly spoken! I should have thought this piece had been good; but the lady has so persuasive an eloquence, she turns things in so agreeable a manner, that one must be of her opinion in spite of one's self.

Urania. For my part, I am not so complaisant; and to tell you my real thoughts, I look upon this comedy to be one of the most diverting the author ever wrote.

Climene. Oh! you make me pity you, to talk in this manner; I cannot bear this obscurity of discernment. Can one who has the least virtue, find any thing agreeable in a piece that keeps one's

THE  
modestly  
imagina  
Eliza  
How te  
cism?  
such an  
Clim  
earnest  
not let  
this co  
Ura  
king t  
Clim  
possibl  
confus  
Ura  
ment t  
Clim  
not-se  
heaver  
cover  
bolde  
El  
Cl  
U  
you f  
Cl  
it ou  
U  
was  
C  
wher  
U  
that  
C

modesty under a perpetual alarm, and sullies the imagination at every turn?

Eliza. What a pretty manner of speaking is that? How terribly rough you play, madam, in criticism? Moliere is much to be pitied when he has such an enemy as you.

Climene. Believe me, my dear, correct in good earnest your judgment; and for your honour do not let any body know that you were pleased with this comedy.

Urania. Why really I saw nothing in it so shocking to modesty as you say.

Climene. The whole of it is so; and it is impossible for a virtuous woman to see it without confusion, there is so much ordure in it.

Urania. You must have a particular discernment then for ordure; for I saw none in it.

Climene. It is undoubtedly, because you will not see it; for in short, all this ordure is, thank heaven, naked to the eye; it has not the least cover to conceal it, and the nudity of it shocks the boldest eyes.

Eliza. Oh!

Climene. Ha, ha, ha.

Urania. Pray point me out some of this ordure you speak of, if you please.

Climene. Lack-a-day! is it necessary to point it out?

Urania. Yes; I only ask of you one passage that was very shocking to you.

Climene. Needs there any other than the scene wherein Agnes tells what they took from her.

Urania. And is there the least smuttiness in that?

Climene. Ah!

Urania. Pray?

Climene. Fy.

Urania. Nay, but?

Climene. I have nothing to say to you.

Urania. For my part, I do not see the least harm in it.

Climene. So much the worse for you.

Urania. Rather so much the better, I think. I observe things on the side that is shewn me; and do not turn them about, to find what I ought not to see.

Climene. A lady's modesty—

Urania. Consists not in grimace. It ill becomes one to be wiser than those who are wise: affectation in this affair is worse than every thing else; and nothing appears to me so foolish as that delicacy of honour which takes every thing in a wrong light, gives a criminal sense to the most innocent words, and is offended at the shadow of things. Believe me, they who make so much ado are not esteemed the most virtuous women. On the contrary, their mysterious severity, and affected grimace provoke the censure of every body upon the actions of their lives. People are glad to discover any thing to carp at; and to give you an instance, there was some ladies at this play the other day, over against the box we were in, who by the looks they affected during the whole piece, the turning aside their heads, and the hiding their faces, occasioned several silly things being said on their conduct, all round them, that would never have been said without this; and even one of the footmen cried out aloud, that they were more chaste in their ears than all the rest of their bodies.



Climene. In short, one must be blind in this piece, and not seem to see things.

Urania. One ought not to see in it what is not in it.

Climene. Ah! I maintain it once more, that the smuttiness in it puts out one's eyes.

Urania. And I do not think so.

Climene. What? does not Agnes, in the passage we are speaking of, say what visibly shocks modesty?

Urania. No truly: she says not one word but what, of itself, is decent enough; and if you will conceive something else as couched under it, it is you who make the ordure, and not she, since she speaks of nothing but the ribbon which was taken from her.

Climene. Hoh! Ribbon as long as you please, but that *my* that she stops at is not put there for nothing. Comical thoughts arise upon this *my*. This *my* is furiously scandalous; and say what you can, you can never defend the insolence of it.

Eliza. True, cousin, I am for the lady against this *my*. *My* is to the last degree insolent, and you are in the wrong to defend this *my*.

Climene. It has an obscenity that one cannot bear.

Eliza. How do you call that word, madam?

Climene. Obscenity, madam.

Eliza. Hoh! good lack-a-day! Obscenity. I do not understand this word, but I think it is the prettiest I ever heard.

Climene. In short, you see your own relation takes my part.

Urania. O dear! she is a tattling girl, who

speaks contrary to what she thinks. You will not much depend upon her if you will believe me.

Eliza. Fy! how cruel you are to make the lady suspect me! consider a little what condition I should be in should she believe what you say. Am I so far unhappy, madam, that you should entertain this thought of me?

Climene. No, no, I regard not her words, I think you more sincere than she says.

Eliza. Oh! you are infinitely in the right, madam; and you do me justice when you believe I think you the most-engaging person I ever beheld; that I enter into all your sentiments, and am charmed with every expression you utter.

Climene. Pray speak not so affectedly.

Eliza. One sees it, madam, very plainly, and that every thing is natural in you. Your words, the tone of your voice, your looks, your gait, your action and your dress, have an air of quality in them that inchant people. I study you by my eyes, by my ears; and am so full of you, that I endeavour to imitate you in every thing.

Climene. You are pleased to banter me, madam.

Eliza. Pardon me, madam, who could banter you?

Climene. I am no good model, madam.

Eliza. Oh! yes, madam.

Climene. You flatter me, madam.

Eliza. Indeed, madam, I do not.

Climene. Pray, madam, have a little mercy on me.

Eliza. I have so much mercy on you, that I do not say half of what I think of you.

Climene. Oh heavens! Let us drop it, pray.

You would throw me into a horrible confusion.  
[To Urania.] You see in short, madam, we are  
both against you, and obstinacy sits so ill upon  
witty people that——

S C E N E IV.

THE MARQUIS, CLIMENE, GALOPIN,  
URANIA, ELIZA.

GALOPIN at the chamber door.

**P**RAY stop, Sir, if you please.

The Marquis. Dost thou know who I am,  
fellow?

Galopin. I know you very well, but you shall  
not go in.

The Marquis. Hey, what a bustle is here, you lit-  
tle skip-jack.

Galopin. It is not fair to endeavour to get in,  
in spite of people's teeth.

The Marquis. I will see thy mistress.

Galopin. She is not within, I tell you.

The Marquis. Why there she is in her cham-  
ber.

Galopin. That is true, she is there; but she is  
not at home for all that.

Urania. What is the meaning of this? what is  
the matter there?

The Marquis. It is your footman, madam, who  
is playing the fool.

Galopin. I tell him, madam, you are not at  
home, and yet he will come in whether I will or  
no.

Urania. And why did you tell the gentleman  
that I am not at home?



Galopin You was very angry with me the other day for telling him you were at home.

Urania. See the insolence of this knave! Pray, Sir, do not believe what he says; it is a little giddy brained rogue, and he takes you for another person.

The Marquis. I saw it plainly, madam, and had it not been in respect to you, I should have taught him to know people of quality.

Eliza. My cousin is much obliged to you for this deference.

Urania to Galopin.] A chair there, fauce-box.

Galopin. Is not there one?

Urania. Bring it hither.

[Galopin pushes the chair rudely, and goes out.]

## SCENE V.

THE MARQUIS, CLIMENE, URANIA, ELIZA.

THE MARQUIS.

**T**HAT lacquey of yours, madam, has a contempt for my person.

Eliza. He would be much to blame, certainly.

The Marquis. It is perhaps because I pay interest for my ill looks. [Laughs.] He, he, he!

Eliza. He will know people of quality better when he grows older.

The Marquis. What were you talking about, ladies, when I interrupted you?

Urania. About the play of *The School for Wives*.

The Marquis. I am but just come from it.

Climene. Well, Sir, what is your opinion of it?

THE  
The  
Clim  
The  
world.  
place.  
door,  
pray, v  
in.

Eliz  
The Sc  
The  
a wret  
Ura  
expect

DORAM

D  
has be  
days;  
than th  
it. F  
steeme  
thers.

Ura  
of it.

The  
i'gad;  
what c

The Marquis. Why, I think it is very foolish.  
Climene. Oh! how glad am I of that!

The Marquis. The most villainous thing in the world. What the duce! I could scarce get a place. I thought I should have been stifled at the door, and never was I so trampled upon. See, pray, what a condition my rollers and ribbons are in.

Eliza. Why really, this cries vengeance against The School for Wives, and you justly condemn it.

The Marquis. I dare say there never was such a wretched performance.

Urania. But here comes Dorantes, whom we expected.

## SCENE VI.

DORANTES, THE MARQUIS, CLIMENE, ELIZA,  
URANIA.

DORANTES.

**D**O not let me disturb you, but pray continue your discourse. The subject you are upon has been the general one through Paris these four days; and never was any thing more diverting than the different judgments that are passed upon it. For the very things which I have heard it esteemed for by some, have been condemned by others.

Urania. Here is the marquis speaks very ill of it.

The Marquis. It is true. I think it detestable, i'gad; detestable to the last degree of detestable; what one may call detestable.

Dorantes. And I, my dear marquis, think the opinion detestable.

The Marquis. How, knight, do you pretend to vindicate the piece.

Dorantes. Yes, I do pretend to vindicate it.

The Marquis. I'gad, I warrant it detestable.

Dorantes. That warrant is not city-security. But, marquis, pray, what makes this play detestable?

The Marquis. What makes it detestable?

Dorantes. Yes.

The Marquis. It is detestable, because it is so.

Dorantes. There is not a word to say after this; the cause is ended. But yet inform us, and tell us what faults it has.

The Marquis. What do I know? I did not so much as give myself the trouble to hear it. But in short, I know I never beheld any thing so villainous; and Dorillas, who sat opposite to me, was of my opinion.

Dorantes. The authority is good, thou art excellently supported.

The Marquis. One needs only observe the continual loud laughs set up in the pit: nothing more is necessary to prove it is good for nothing.

Dorantes. Then, marquis, you are one of those fine gentlemen who reckon the pit even destitute of common sense, and would be grieved to laugh along with that, though it were at the best thing in the world; I saw the other day one of our friends upon the stage, who made himself ridiculous by this. He heard the whole piece with the most fullen gravity imaginable; and every thing that made others merry made him frown. He shrugged up his shoulders, when other people laughed, and looked with

pity up  
down v  
then, r  
to see  
a gene  
ry bod  
than h  
with y  
at a pl  
and ha  
taste; a  
a bad j  
genera  
probat  
compo  
ing of  
thers j  
is to b  
blind p  
ish del

The  
knight  
to acqu  
ha, ha,

Dor  
for goo  
art. It  
felves  
who ar  
ry thin  
who sh  
not so  
upon v  
music,  
of cont



pity upon the pit; and sometimes again looking down with vexation, he cried out aloud, laugh then, pit, laugh. It was really a second comedy to see our friend so vexed; he shewed away like a generous fellow to the whole assembly, and every body allowed no man could play his part better than he did. Learn, marquis, you and others with you, that good sense has no determined place at a play; that the difference betwixt half a guinea and half a crown makes nothing at all to a good taste; and whether standing or sitting one may pass a bad judgment; and that, in short, to take it in general, I should depend a good deal upon the approbation of the pit, because amongst those who compose it, there are many who are capable of judging of a piece according to rules, and because others judge by a proper method of judging, which is to be guided by things, and not to have any blind prejudice or affected complaisance, nor foolish delicacy.

The Marquis. So thou art a defender of the pit, knight? I'gad, I am glad of it, and I shall not fail to acquaint it thou art one of its friends. Ha, ha, ha, ha, he!

Dorantes. Laugh as much as you please, I am for good sense, and hate such foolish people as thou art. It vexes me to see people make fools of themselves notwithstanding their quality; your folks who are always decisive, and speak boldly of every thing without knowing a word of the matter; who shall clap ye all the bad parts of a play, and not so much as stir at those that are good; who upon viewing a picture, or hearing a concert of music, both blame and praise every thing by rule of contraries; who pick up terms of art wherever

they can, which they get by heart, and never fail to disjoint them, and displace them. 'Sdeath, gentlemen, be silent. Since heaven has not blessed you with the knowledge of one sublunary thing, do not make yourselves a laughing-stock to those who hear you; and consider that by being silent, you may perhaps be thought clever fellows.

The Marquis. I'gad, knight, thou carriest this matter——

Dorantes. Why, marquis, I do not speak to you; it is to a dozen of those gentry who disgrace the courtiers by their extravagant manners, and make the people believe we are all alike. For my part, I will do all I can to justify myself from it, and I will so rally them wherever I meet them, that at last they shall grow wise.

The Marquis. Has Lyfander any wit, think you?

Dorantes. Yes, doubtless, and a good deal too.

Urania. That is what no body can deny him.

The Marquis. Ask him what he thinks of The School for Wives; you will see he will tell you it is not to his taste.

Dorantes. Alas! numbers of people are spoiled by too much wit, who see things imperfectly by strength of light, and who would even be sorry to be of other folks opinion, that they may have the honour of deciding.

Urania. Why really this friend of ours is of that sort: he must be the first of his opinion, and have others wait through respect to his judgment: every one's approbation that gets the start of his is an insult upon his understanding, which he highly revenges by taking the opposite party: he would have folks consult him in every witty affair; and I am

certain had the author shewn him his play before he represented it, he would have thought it the best piece that possibly could be written.

The Marquis. And what say you of the marchioness Araminta, who publishes it about town for a dreadful one, and says she could never endure the ordure it is full of?

Dorantes. I shall say she deserves the character she has assumed, and that there are persons who make themselves ridiculous for affecting too much honour. Though she is witty, she has followed the ill example of those, who, growing old, want to make amends for what they see they have lost, and imagine the grimace of a scrupulous prudery will supply the defect of youth and beauty. This same lady carries the affair further than any body; the ingeniousness of her scruples discovers obscenity where it is impossible for any body else to see it. They tell ye that these scruples proceed so far as even to disfigure our language, and that there are very few words in it which the severity of this lady will not retrench either the head or the tail, on account of the immodest syllables she finds in them.

Urania. You are a perfect wag, knight.

The Marquis. In short, knight, you think to defend your play by satirizing those who condemn it.

Dorantes. Not at all; but this lady, in my opinion is unjustly scan—

Eliza. Softly, Sir knight; there may be other ladies besides her who may be of the same sentiments.

Dorantes. I very well know that you are not so, and that when you saw this performance—

Eliza. It is true, but I am now quite of a dif-



ferent way of thinking, and this lady [pointing to Climene.] supports her opinion by such convincing reasons, that she carried me quite on her side.

Dorantes to Climene.] Oh! madam, I ask pardon: and, if you please, I will unsay, for love of you, all that I have said.

Climene. I will not have it to be for love of me, but for the love of reason; for in a word, that piece, to take it right, is absolutely indefensible; and I do not conceive——

Urania. Hoh! here is the author, Mr. Lyfidas; he comes *a propos*, for this affair. Take your chair, Mr. Lyfidas, and sit down there.

## S C E N E VII.

LYSIDAS, CLIMENE, URANIA, ELIZA, DORANTES, THE MARQUIS.

LYSIDAS.

**I** AM rather late in coming to you, madam; but the lady marchioness I was speaking to you about made me read my piece to her, and the praises given it have detained me longer than I thought of.

Eliza. Praise is a wonderful charm to detain an author.

Urania. Sit down then, Mr. Lyfidas, we shall read your piece after supper.

Lyfidas. All they who were there are to come the first night, and have promised me to do their duty as they should do.

Urania. I believe it; but pray once more please

to sit down. We are upon an affair here which I should be very glad to go on with.

Lyfidas. You will take a box, I hope, madam, for that night.

Urania. We shall see. Pray let us continue our discourse.

Lyfidas. Most part of them are already taken.

Urania. It is mighty well. In short, I wanted you when you came, for every body is against me here.

Eliza to Urania, and pointing to Dorantes.] He was on your side at first; but now he knows the lady is at the head of the opposite party, I suppose you have nothing to do but seek out for other assistance.

Climene. No, no. I would not have him neglect his court to miss your cousin, I allow his wit to be on the side of his heart.

Dorantes. With this permission, madam, I shall presume to defend myself.

Urania. But first, pray let us know the sentiments of Mr. Lyfidas.

Lyfidas. Upon what, madam?

Urania. Upon the subject of *The School for Wives*.

Lyfidas. Ha, ha!

Dorantes. What is your opinion of it?

Lyfidas. I have nothing to say upon that head; and you know that amongst us authors we ought to be vastly careful how we speak of each others performances.

Dorantes. But pray, between us, what do you think of this comedy?

Lyfidas. I, Sir?

Urania. Tell us your opinion honestly.

Lyfidas. I think it an excellent performance.

Dorantes. Really?

Lyfidas. Really; why not? Is it not indeed a very fine one?

Dorantes. Um, um, you are a cruel youth, Mr. Lyfidas; you do not speak as you think.

Lyfidas. Pardon me.

Dorantes. Lack-a day, I know you; do not dissemble.

Lyfidas. I, Sir?

Dorantes. I see plainly that you speak well of this piece only out of modesty; and that at the bottom of your heart you are of the opinion of a great many people, who think it bad.

Lyfidas. Ha, ha, ha!

Dorantes. Nay, confess that this comedy is a foolish piece.

Lyfidas. Your connoisseurs do not approve of it.

The Marquis. Faith, knight, thou hast it, thou art paid for thy raillery. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Dorantes. Laugh on, my dear marquis, laugh on.

The Marquis. You see we have the learned on our side.

Dorantes. It is true, Mr. Lyfidas's judgment is something considerable, but he will excuse me if I do not yield for all this; and since I have presumed to defend myself against the lady's sentiments, he will not take it amiss if I oppose his.

Eliza. What, when you see the lady, my lord marquis, and Mr. Lyfidas against you, dare you resist still? Fie, that's acting with a bad grace.

Climene. For my part, what confounds me is,



that sensible people can take it in their heads to protect the stupidity of this piece.

The Marquis. Demme, madam, it is a wretched performance.

Dorantes. That is soon said, marquis, there is nothing more easy than to cut the matter short thus, and I do not see any thing can withstand thy powerful decisions.

The Marquis. 'Slife, all the other comedians who have seen it speak ill of it.

Dorantes. Oh! I say not a word more, you are very right, marquis, since all the other comedians speak ill of it, we must certainly believe them. They are all discerning people, and speak without interest; there is no more to be said, I yield.

Climene. Yield, or not yield, I know very well you shall never persuade me to endure the immodesty of this piece; no more than you shall the disoblighing satire in it against the ladies.

Urania. For my part, I shall take care not to be offended at it, and to take nothing to my own account that is said in it. This sort of satire falls directly upon the manners, and hits the persons only by rebound. Let us not apply to ourselves the strokes of a general censure; let us profit by the lesson, if we can, without making as if they spoke to us. We should view all the ridiculous paintings that are drawn upon the stage, without being uneasy at them. They are public mirrors, where we are never to declare that we behold ourselves; and it is downright to tax ourselves with a crime, to be scandalized at the reproof.

Climene. As to myself, I do not speak of these things in regard to any part I can have in them; and I think I behave myself in such a manner as

not to fear being looked for among the paintings drawn for disorderly women.

Eliza. You, madam, will never be looked for there; your conduct is sufficiently known by every body.

Urania to Climene.] Therefore, madam, I said nothing that can reach you; and my words, like the satire in comedy, rest in general positions.

Climene. I do not doubt it, madam. But however let us pass this point over. I do not know what reception you will give the reflections thrown on our sex in a certain part of the piece; I confess it vexes me to see this impudent author have the assurance to call us animals.

Urania. Do not you observe it is a ridiculous character he makes speak it?

Dorantes. And then, madam, do not you know that the reproaches of lovers never give scandal? that it is much the same with furious as with fondling lovers, and that on such occasions the strangest words, and even something still worse, are taken very often as marks of kindness by the very persons who receive them.

Eliza. Say what you will I can digest this no more than the porridge and cream-tart the lady just now spoke of.

The Marquis. O! yes, faith, cream-tart; that is what I was observing a while ago; cream-tart! How am I obliged to you, madam, for having reminded me of cream-tart! Are there apples enough in Normandy for cream-tart? Cream-tart, i'gad, cream-tart!

Dorantes. Well, what mean you with your cream-tart?

The Marquis. 'Slife, cream tart, knight!

Dorantes. But what?

The Marquis. Cream-tart!

Dorantes. Pray let me know your reasons.

The Marquis. Cream-tart!

Urania. But you should explain your meaning, methinks.

The Marquis. Cream-tart, madam!

Urania. What objection can you make to it?

The Marquis. I? Nothing: cream-tart!

Urania. Oh! I give it up.

Eliza. My lord marquis goes the right way to work, and plays ye off finely. But I wish Mr. Lyfidas would finish, and give them a little touch or two in his manner.

Lyfidas. I am very favourable to other people's performances, and do not chuse to find fault with them. But in short, no offence to the friendship the knight declares for the author, you must own to me these sort of plays are not properly plays, and that there is a great deal of difference between all these trifles, compared with the beauty of serious pieces. Yet all the world gives into it now-a-days; there's no thronging after any thing but this; and you see nothing but a frightful solitude at the grand works, when these silly things shall have all Paris flocking to see them. I own to you my heart sometimes bleeds at it, and it is a scandal to all France.

Climene. It is true, people's taste is strangely corrupted in this point, and the age vulgarizes furiously.

Eliza. That vulgarizes is very pretty; pray did you invent it, madam?

Climene. Ah!

Eliza. I am much in doubt about it.



Dorantes. You think then, Mr. Lyfidas, that all the wit and all the beauty lie in serious poems? and that comic pieces are trifles which deserve not to be praised?

Urania. For my part, that is not my sentiment. Tragedy is undoubtedly very fine when it is well touched; but comedy has its charms, and I think one is as difficult as the other.

Dorantes. Certainly, madam; and for the difficulty, should you place it more on the side of comedy, perhaps you would not be in the wrong: for I really think it much easier to soar upon grand sentiments, to defy fortune in verse, to accuse the destinies, and reproach the gods, than to enter properly into the ridicule of men, and to make their faults appear agreeable on the stage. When you paint heroes, you do what you have amind, these are portraits drawn at pleasure, where we seek not for resemblance; you have only to follow the traces of an exalted imagination, which frequently forsakes the true to hit the marvellous. But when you paint men, nature must be your guide. People expect resemblance in these portraits; you have done nothing if you do not display the people of the age so as to make them known. In a word, in serious pieces it is sufficient to escape censure to say things that are well written and good sense. But this is not sufficient in the others; you must be merry, and it is a strange enterprize to make your better sort of people laugh.

Climene. I reckon myself among the better sort of people, and yet I found not a single word in it to make any body laugh.

The Marquis. Faith, nor I neither.

Dorantes. As for you, marquis, I am not sur-

THE  
prized

Ly  
not m  
lery t

Do

Ly

Do

you n

these

gentle

works

the w

know

as we

nious

with

play

find

the d

to th

form

tural

fashi

licat

ing

U

shor

fore

and

rail

I

peo

to b

ber

ridi

prized at it, it is because you found no puns in it.

Lyfidas. Faith, Sir, what we meet with there is not much better, and in my opinion all the rail-  
lery that is in it is very insipid.

Dorantes. The court thought not so——

Lyfidas. Oh! the court, Sir?

Dorantes. Speak out, Mr. Lyfidas. I see plainly you mean that the court knows very little about these matters; and this is the usual refuge of you gentlemen authors, in the bad success of your works, to accuse only the injustice of the age, and the want of discernment in courtiers. Please to know, Mr. Lyfidas, that courtiers can see and hear as well as other people; that folks may be ingenious with a Venice point and a feather, as well as with a bob-peruke; that the grand test of all your play is the court; that you must study its taste to find the art of succeeding; there is no place where the decisions are so just; and without bringing into the account all the men of learning there, one forms a manner of genius there only by plain natural good sense, and conversation with people of fashion, who, without comparison, judge more delicately of things, than all the common-place learning of pedants.

Urania. It is true that if you stay but ever so short a while there, things enough pass daily before your eyes to acquire a habit of knowing them; and above all whatever belongs to good or bad raillery.

Dorantes. I own, the court has some ridiculous people about it, and I am the first, as you may see, to banter them. But, faith, there are a great number too amongst the wits by profession; and if we ridicule some marquisses, I think there are a good

many more authors to ridicule; and what a droll thing it would be to bring them upon the stage, with their learned grimaces, and their fantastical refinements; their vicious custom of assassinating people in their works; their greediness of praise; their sparingness of thought; their traffic of reputation; and their lines offensive and defensive! as also their learned wars and combats in prose and verse.

Lyfidas. Moliere, Sir, is very happy in having so warm a patron as you are. But however, to come to the point, the question in debate is, whether his piece be good; and here I engage myself to shew there are in the whole upwards of a hundred visible faults.

Urania. It is an odd thing that you authors should always condemn the pieces which every one runs after, and praise those which no body go to.

Dorantes. That is because it is generous to be on the side of the afflicted.

Urania. But pray, Mr. Lyfidas, let us see some of these faults that I perceived nothing of.

Lyfidas. They who are masters of Aristotle and Horace see immediately, madam, that this comedy offends against all the rules of art.

Urania. I confess I have no intimacy with these gentlemen, and that I am ignorant of the rules of art.

Dorantes. One would think, to hear you talk, that these rules of art were the greatest mysteries in the world; and yet they are nothing but some easy observations, which good sense has made upon what may take away the pleasure one finds in these sort of poems; and the same good sense which made these observations formerly, easily makes

THE  
them a  
and A  
the u  
piece  
not ta  
whole  
every  
takes  
Ur  
tlemen  
know  
no bo  
Do  
little  
for in  
do no  
ing to  
made  
to wh  
never  
has o  
take  
vent  
U  
minc  
well  
in th  
forba  
D  
have  
whe  
cook  
U  
men  
ough



them at all times, without the assistance of Horace and Aristotle. I would be glad to know whether the universal rule is not to please; and whether a piece upon the stage that has gained its end, did not take a right way? Would you have it, that the whole public is mistaken in these matters, and that every one should not be a judge of the pleasure he takes in them?

Urania. I have observed one thing in these gentlemen; it is that those who talk most of rules, and know them better than others, make plays which no body thinks good.

Dorantes. And this, madam, is what shews what little regard ought to be had to their puzzling rules: for in short, if pieces which are according to rule do not please, and those that please are not according to rule, the rules must consequently have been made wrong. Let us therefore despise this chicanery to which they would subject the public taste, and never consult any thing in a play but the effect it has on us. Let us heartily follow the things that take our fancy, and never hunt for reasons to prevent our having pleasure.

Urania. For my part, when I see a play, I only mind whether things touch me; and when I am well diverted by it, I do not enquire whether I was in the wrong, and whether the rules of Aristotle forbid me to laugh.

Dorantes. It is directly like a man who should have found an excellent sauce, and should enquire whether it were made by the rules of a French cook.

Urania. Very true; and I admire at the refinements of certain people in matters whercin we ought to follow our own sense.

Dorantes. You are right, madam, to think all these mysterious refinements impertinent. For, in short, if they take place, we must ever after disbelieve ourselves; our own senses must be slaves in every thing; and even in eating and drinking we must not presume any longer to think any thing good, without leave from these gentlemen adepts.

Lycidas. In short, Sir, your whole reason is, that The School for Wives has pleased; and you should not at all care whether it were done by the rule, provided——

Dorantes. Not so fast, Mr. Lycidas, I do not grant you that. I say plainly the great art is to please, and that this comedy having pleased those it was made for, I think it sufficient for it, and that there is no reason to mind the rest. But withal, I maintain it does not offend against any of the rules you speak of. I have read them, thank heaven, as well as other people, and I could easily make it appear that we have not, perhaps, a more regular piece extant.

Eliza. Courage, Mr. Lycidas, we are undone, if you give way.

Lycidas. How, Sir, the protasis, the epitasis, and the peripetie——

Dorantes. Nay, Mr. Lycidas, you knock us down with your hard words; pray do not seem so learned. Civilize your discourse a little, and speak so that people may understand you. Do you think that a Greek name gives greater force to your reasons? Is it not as pretty to say the exposition of the subject, as the protasis; the plot, as the epitasis, and the unravelling as the peripetie?

Lycidas. These are terms of art, that we are allowed to make use of: but since these words offend your ears, I shall explain myself in another man-

ner; and I desire you would answer me positively to three or four things I am going to say: Can one endure a piece which offends against the proper name of theatrical pieces? For after all, the name of dramatic poem is derived from a Greek word, which signifies to act, to shew that the nature of the poem consists in action; and in this comedy there is no action, but all consists in recitals made by Agnes or by Horace.

The Marquis. Hah! hah! Knight!

Climene. Ingeniously remarked! this is coming to the nicest point of things.

Lyfidas. Can any thing be more silly or low, than some words in it, which made every body laugh, and especially that of children by the ear?

Climene. Very well.

Eliza. Oh!

Lyfidas. Is not the scene of the footman and the maid within doors very impertinent and tedious?

The Marquis. Indeed it is.

Climene. Certainly.

Eliza. He is in the right.

Lyfidas. Does not Arnolph give Horace his money too freely? And since it is the ridiculous character of the piece, should he have made him do the action of a worthy man?

The Marquis. Good. The remark is very just.

Climene. Admirable!

Eliza. Surprizing.

Lyfidas. Are not the sermon and the maxims very foolish, and what strike at the respect due to our religion?

The Marquis. Indeed they are.

Climene. Spoke as it ought be.



Eliza. Nothing can be better.

Lyfidas. And that in short, Mr. La Souche, who is made a man of wit, and who appears so serious in several passages, does he not descend to something too comical, and too extravagant in the fifth act, when he tells Agnes the violence of his love, with that wild rolling of his eyes, with those ridiculous sighs, and those foolish tears, which set every one a laughing?

The Marquis. Surprizing, faith!

Climene. Marvellous!

Eliza. Well done, Mr. Lyfidas.

Lyfidas. I pass over numberless other things, for fear of being tedious.

The Marquis. Faith, knight, thou art wel paid up now.

Dorantes. Stay a little.

The Marquis. Thou hast met with thy man.

Dorantes. Perhaps so.

The Marquis. Answer, answer, answer, answer.

Dorantes. Very willingly. It is——

The Marquis. Answer then, prithee.

Dorantes. Permit me then. If——

The Marquis. Egad, I defy thee to answer.

Dorantes. Yes, if you talk for ever.

Climene. Pray let us hear what he has to say.

Dorantes. First of all, it is not true, to say that the whole piece consists only of narration: one sees abundance of action in it, which passes upon the stage; and the narrations themselves are of actions according to the constitution of the subject; inasmuch as these narrations are all innocently related to an interested person, who by this means is at every turn thrown into a confusion, which diverts

the spectators, and takes all the measures he can upon each information, to ward off the mischief he dreads.

Urania. For my part, I think the beauty of the subject of *The School for Wives* consists in this continued confidence; and what appears diverting enough to me, is, that a man who has sense, and who is warned of every thing by an innocent creature who is his mistress, and a mar-plot who is his rival, cannot with all this escape what happens to him.

The Marquis. Trifles, trifles.

Climene. A mighty answer, indeed!

Eliza. Weak reasons.

Dorantes. As to what regards the children by the ear, it has no jest in it but in regard to Arnolph; and the author did not insert it as a jest of itself, but only for a thing which characterizes the man, and paints the extravagance so much the better, since he repeats a trivial, silly thing that Agnes had said, as the finest thing in the world, and what gives him an inexpressible delight.

The Marquis. Wretchedly answered.

Climene. It is not satisfactory.

Eliza. It is saying nothing.

Dorantes. As to his freedom in giving the money, besides that the letter of his very good friend is a sufficient security to him, it is not inconsistent that a worthy man may be ridiculous in some things. And the scene of Allen and Georgetta within doors, which has been thought so insipid by some people, is not without proper reasons; and in the same manner that Arnolph, by the innocence of his mistress, is caught, during his journey, upon his return he stands a long time at the door,

by the innocence of his servants, that he might be thoroughly punished by the very things that he expected would make his precautions sure.

The Marquis. These reasons are trifling.

Climene. This is all to no purpose.

Eliza. It is mean.

Dorantes. The very religious people who heard the moral discourse, which you call a sermon, saw nothing that struck at what you were speaking of; and certainly the extravagance of Arnolph, and the innocence of her he speaks to, justifies these words of hell and boiling cauldrons. And in the fifth act, the amorous transports, which you think a burlesque, and extravagant, is certainly a satire upon lovers, and I dare say the most serious people, upon the like occasions, will say and do things—

The Marquis. Indeed, knight, you had better be silent.

Dorantes. True; but really if we were to be attentive to ourselves in our amorous moments—

The Marquis. I will not hear you.

Dorantes. Do hear me. Are not we in the violence of the passion—

The Marquis. Tol, lol, derol. [Sings.

Dorantes. How——

The Marquis. Fa, lol, fa, lol, fa, lol, derol.

Dorantes. I do not know whether——

The Marquis. Tal, lal, tal, lal, deral.

Urania. I am of opinion——

The Marquis. Fa, lol, fa lol, fa, lol, derol.

Urania. To amend our School for Wives, I think one might make a little comedy out of the merry things that have passed in our disputes.

Dorantes. Very true.

The Marquis. I think the part you would play, knight, would not be to your advantage at all.



Dorantes. That is true, marquis.

Climene. If they would treat the affair just in the manner that it has passed, I for my part would wish it were done.

Eliza. I would freely give them my character.

Lyfidas. And I mine.

Urania. As every body would be pleased, do you, knight, take notes of it, and give it to Moliere, to make it up into a play, as you know he can do it easily.

Climene. It would not be any thing in his praise, so he would set no value upon it.

Urania. No, no, I know him very well; if people crowd to his pieces, he does not value who laughs at them.

Dorantes. But I do not see how we can end this dispute; as there is neither discovery nor marriage, we cannot find an unravelling of the plot.

Urania. We must contrive something for that.

## SCENE THE LAST.

CLIMENE, URANIA, ELIZA, DORANTES, THE  
MARQUIS, LYSIDAS, GALOPIN.

GALOPIN.

**M**ADAM, supper is ready.

Dorantes. This is the very thing we wanted to clear up our plot; we could think of nothing more natural. There shall be a strong dispute on both sides, no body shall yield; a servant shall acquaint them that supper is upon the table, and they shall all go to it.

Urania. We shall finish here, and the play cannot end better.

T H E E N D.

I

C

V

THE  
IMPROMPTU  
OF  
VERSAILLES.  
A  
COMEDY.

VOL. II.

M



EX-  
EX-

*The I*  
*On*  
*and*  
*No*

**M**  
marks  
prefer  
the fu  
partic  
which  
and f  
of V  
this p  
most  
ly aff  
liere  
thoug  
very  
marr  
the I  
page

*The IMPROMPTU of VERSAILLES, a Comedy of  
One Act, acted at Versailles 14th of October 1663,  
and at Paris, at the Theatre-Royal, the 4th of  
November the same Year.*

**M**OLIERE, being greatly favoured by the king, and having just received some fresh marks of his kindness, thought that he ought in his presence, and before the whole court, to destroy the suspicion of his having drawn the characters of particular persons in the SCHOOL for WIVES, which might have proved disadvantageous to him; and for this purpose brought on the IMPROMPTU of VERSAILLES. He does not spare Bourfaut in this piece, and always mentions him with the utmost contempt: but his talents and genius were only affected by this contempt; he had attacked Moliere in a more sensible part. We should have thought it a curiosity, had the author's works been very ancient, to find in this comedy the time of his marriage with Bejart the comedian's daughter. (See the IMPROMPTU of VERSAILLES, scene 1st. page 272.)

A C T O R S.

MOLIERE, a ridiculous marquis.

BRECOURT, a man of quality.

LA GRANGE, a ridiculous marquis.

DU CROISY, a poet.

Mrs. DU PARC, a ceremonious marchioness.

Mrs. BEJART, a prude.

Mrs. DE BRLE, a sage coquette.

Mrs. MOLIERE, a satirical wit.

Mrs. DU CROISY, a whining gypsey.

Mrs. HERVEY, a conceited chamber-maid.

TORRILLIERE, an impertinent marquis.

BEJART, a busy-body.

FOUR ATTENDANTS.

SCENE Versailles, in the king's anti-chamber.



I

MOL

DU

BE

LI

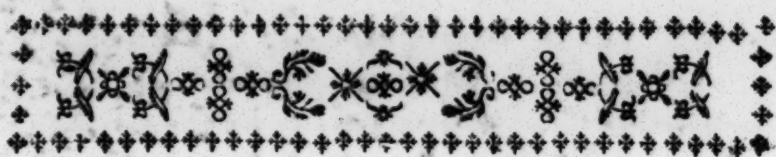
HI

MOLI



do you





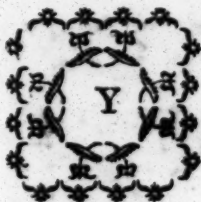
T H E  
I M P R O M P T U  
O F  
V E R S A I L L E S.

---

S C E N E I.

MOLIERE, BRE COURT, LA GRANGE,  
DU CROISY, MRS. DU PARC, MRS.  
BEJART, MRS. D'E BRIE, MRS. MO-  
LIERE, MRS. DU CROISY, MRS.  
HERVEY.

MOLIERE alone, talking to the players, who are  
behind the scenes.



YOU are not in earnest sure, gentle-  
men and ladies, will you not come  
hither? Devil take the people! Mr.  
Brecourt.

Brecourt behind the scenes.] What:  
do you want?

Moliere. Mr. La Grange.

La Grange. What is the matter?

Moliere. Mr. Du Croisy.

Du Croisy. What want you?

Moliere. Mrs. Du Parc?

Mrs. Du Parc. Well?

Moliere. Mrs. Bejart.

Mrs. Bejart. Who is there?

Moliere. Mrs. De Brie.

Mrs. De Brie. What now?

Moliere. Mrs. Du Croisy.

Mrs. Du Croisy. What is the matter?

Moliere. Mrs. Hervey.

Mrs. Hervey. I am here.

Moliere. I believe these people will make me mad! [Enter La Grange, Du Croisy, Brecourt]  
'Sdeath, gentlemen, I will go distracted.

Brecourt. What can we do? You distract us to oblige us to play in this manner, when we have not our parts.

Moliere. Actors are sad animals to manage!  
[Enter Mesdemoiselles Bejart, Du Parc, De Brie,  
Moliere, Du Croisy, and Hervey.]

Mrs. Bejart. Well, what do you intend to do now when we are all here?

Mrs. Du Parc. What do you mean?

Mrs. De Brie. What shall we do?

Moliere. As the king is not come yet, nor will these two hours, let us stay here and rehearse our play, as we are all dressed, and we will see how we can play our parts.

La Grange. How can we play what we are ignorant of?

Mrs. Du Parc. I assure you, I have not one word of my part.

Mrs. De Brie. I am certain that I will have occasion to be prompted from beginning to end.

Mrs. Bejart. And I am ready to take the book in my hand.

Mrs. Moliere. I am in the same way.

Mrs. Hervey. My part is but trifling.

Mrs. Du Croisy. Mine is but small too, and yet it is very likely I will be out.

Du Croisy. I would willingly give ten pistoles to be quit of it.

Brecourt. And I would take twenty good strokes of a cudgel.

Moliere. What would any of you do if you were in my place, you are all so distressed with having a difficult part to play?

Mrs. Bejart. As you wrote the piece, you cannot be afraid of being out, so need not complain.

Moliere. Have not I reason to say, I would give any thing in the world to have it over? may not I fear my memory? but this is trifling; may not an author tremble when a comic performance is exposed to such an audience as this? to undertake to divert people who strike us with respect, and only laugh when they please? You cannot think the anxiousness of success which affects me alone, nothing.

Mrs. Bejart. Then you should not have undertaken to do in a week what you are now afraid of, you should be more cautious.

Moliere. When the king commanded me, I was obliged to do it.

Mrs. Bejart. You might have excused yourself respectfully, by pleading the impossibility of doing it in so short a time: any body else would take care not to expose his reputation. What an ad-



vantage will all your enemies make of it! and what will become of you, if the thing do not succeed?

Mrs. De Brie. Really you should have desired more time; you might have excused yourself from doing it in so little a time.

Moliere. Madam, nothing is so agreeable to kings as a ready obedience; obstacles are very disagreeable to them: things do not please but just at the time desired, and it takes away all the pleasure of their diversion if they must wait for it, as chance pleasures are the most agreeable. We should never consider ourselves, when they desire any thing of us, but study to please them; and when they desire us to do any thing, it is our part immediately to obey their desires. We had better perform badly, than refuse to obey them quickly; and if we are not applauded for good performance, we have the credit of being obedient: but let us begin our rehearsal.

Mrs. Bejart. If we do not know our parts, what will you do?

Moliere. Yes you shall know them, and if you should be a little imperfect, as it is prose, and you are acquainted with the subject, you may supply any deficiency by your own wit.

Mrs. Bejart. I beg your pardon, but prose is more difficult to supply than verse.

Mrs. Moliere. I think you should have composed a comedy which you could have played yourself, without any assistance.

Moliere. Hold your tongue, wife, you are a fool.

Mrs. Moliere. I am obliged to you, good husband. See what an alteration matrimony makes in people! a year and a half ago such words as these would never have come from your mouth.

Moliere. Pray hold your peace.

Mrs. Moliere. It is very extraordinary that we should be deprived of all our good qualities by a little ceremony, and that the same person should appear so very different in the eyes of a husband and a gallant.

Moliere. What a prating is here!

Mrs. Moliere. Upon my word, were I to compose a comedy, it would certainly be on that subject. I would make the husbands tremble for the difference there is between their rough manners and the complaisance of a gallant; I would justify the women in several things they are accused with.

Moliere. Well, be silent at present, we have something else to do than prattle now.

Mrs. Bejart. Why did you not make that comedy of comedians that you have so long talked of to us, as you were desired to work on the subject of the criticism that is made upon you? it was ready invented, and would have come very proper, and so much the better, as having undertook to paint you, they opened a way for you to do the same, and it may with more propriety be called their picture, than what they have done can be called yours; to imitate a comedian in a comic part, is not describing him, but only describing the characters he represents, and using the same strokes and colours which he is obliged to use in the several pictures of the ridiculous characters, which he copies after nature. But to imitate a comedian in serious parts, is describing him by faults which are his own, as those characters will not bear the ridiculous tone of voice, or the gestures by which he is known again.

Moliere. What you say is right, but I have rea-

sions for not doing it: between us, I did not think it worth the trouble, and the time it would take to execute that idea. I have not been able to see them above three or four times since we came to Paris, as their days of playing are the same with ours; I should like to study them, to make portraits in imitation of them; I got nothing of their manner of acting but what was obvious to the eye.

Mrs. Du Parc. From your description of them, I have discovered some resemblances of them.

Mrs. De Brie. I never heard this spoken of.

Moliere. I once thought of it, but have given it up, as an impertinent thing, and a trifle, that would not divert people.

Mrs. De Brie. Tell me a little of it, as you have told it to other people.

Moliere. We have not time now.

Mrs. De Brie. Only in a few words.

Moliere. I once thought of a comedy, in which there should be a poet, whom I would have represented myself, who should come to offer a piece to a company of comedians just come from the country: he should have said, have you actors and actresses capable of setting off such a piece, for it is an extraordinary one? and the comedian should have answered, Ah! Sir, we have men and women, who have been looked upon as pretty good performers in all the places we have been in. And who plays the king among you? There is one who sometimes performs it. Is it that fine shaped young man? You are certainly in banter! You should have a man that is very fat, and four-square for a king. 'Sdeath a king that's stuffed as he should be. A king of a great size, that can fill a throne genteelly. A fine-shaped king indeed! This is one grand fault



already; but let me hear him repeat a dozen verses. Upon which the comedian should have repeated, for example, some verses of the king of Nicomedia,

Shall I tell thee, Araspes? He has been too faithful to me;

My force encreasing——  
the most naturally that he possibly could. Then the poet: What, do you call that repeating? sure you are not in earnest; you should speak things emphatically. Hearken to me.

[Imitating Monfleury, a celebrated actor of the Hotel de Bourgogne.

Shall I tell thee, &c ——

Observe well this posture; There, lay a stress as you ought on the last verse; that is what gains approbation, and raises a clap. But, Sir, the comedian should have replied, Methinks a king who is discoursing with the captain of his guards, speaks a little more humanely, and scarce makes use of this devilish tone. You do not understand it. Go and speak as you do, you will see if you will get the least applause. Ah, let us try a scene of a lover and his mistress. Upon which an actor and actress should have played a scene together, which is that of Camilla and Curiatius,

Dost go, dear soul, and does this fatal honour  
Please thee at the expence of all our welfare?

Too well I see, alas! &c.

like the other, and as naturally as he was able. Then the poet immediately: You jest sure; you do not repeat it properly, it ought to be thus.

[Imitating Mrs. Beauchateau, a player of the Hotel de Bourgogne.

Dost go, dear soul, &c.

No, I know thee better, &c.

Observe how passionate and natural this is. Admire this smiling countenance which she preserves in the deepest affliction. In short, this is the design; and he should have run over all the players in this manner.

Mrs. De Brie. I think the design very humorous, and I knew some of them by the very first verses. Pray continue.

Moliere, imitating Beauchateau, a comedian of the Hotel de Bourgogne, in some lines of the Cid.]

Pierced to the bottom of my heart, &c.

And do you know this man in the Pompey of Sertorius?

[Imitating Hauteroche, a comedian of the Hotel de Bourgogne.

The enmity which reigns between both parties  
Yields there no honour, &c.

Mrs. De Brie. I believe I am a little acquainted with him.

Moliere. And this?

[Imitating De Villiers, a comedian of the Hotel de Bourgogne.

Lord Polibore is dead, &c.

Mrs. De Brie. Yes, I know who he is; but there are some amongst them, I believe, that you would find it difficult to mimic.

Moliere. O! there is not one of them but what may be caught in some place or other, if I had studied them well: but you make us lose time, which is precious to us. But pray let us mind our play, and not amuse ourselves any more with talking. [To La Grange.] Do you take care to play your part of Marquis well with me.

Mrs. Moliere. Constantly marquisses.

Moliere. Yes, always marquisses: What the duce would you have one take for an agreeable character for the stage? The Marquis now-a-days is the jest of the comedy; and as in all antient comedies there was always a buffoon servant that made the audience laugh, so in all our pieces now there must be always a ridiculous Marquis to divert the company.

Mrs. Bejart. It is true, that cannot be omitted.

Moliere. For you, madam——

Mrs. Du Parc. You may be assured that I will acquit myself very ill of my character, it is too ceremonious for me.

Moliere. Alas! madam, this is what you said when you had that given you in the School for Wives Criticised, yet you performed it extremely well, as every one said who saw you do it. Believe me, this will be the same, and you will play it better than you imagine.

Mrs. Du Parc. How can that be? for there is not a less ceremonious person in the world than I am.

Moliere. You really are so; but by representing a character well so contrary to your humour shews your great abilities as an actress. Endeavour then, all of you, to take the character of your parts right, and to imagine that you are what you represent. [To Du Croisy.] Your part is that of a poet, and you ought to fill yourself with that character, to mark the pedant air which he preserves even in the conversation of the beau monde; that sententious tone of voice, and that exactness of pronunciation which lays a stress on all the syllables, and does not let one letter escape of the strictest orthography. [To Breccourt.] As for you, you play



a courtier, as you have already done in the School for Wives Criticised; that is, you must assume a sedate air, a natural tone of voice, and make very few gestures. [To La Grange.] As for you, I have nothing to say to you. [To Mrs. Bejart.] You represent one of those women who, provided they do not make love, think that every thing else is permitted them; those women who are always fiercely intrenched in their prudery, look despicably upon every body, and think all the good qualities that others possess are nothing in comparison of a wretched honour which every one disregards. Have this character always before your eyes, that you make the grimaces of it right. [To Mrs. De Brie.] As for you, you play one of those women who imagine they are the most virtuous persons in the world, provided they save appearances; those women who think the crime lies only in the scandal; who would carry on the affairs they have quietly on the foot of an honourable attachment, and call those friends whom other people call gallants. Enter spiritedly into this character. [To Ms. Moliere.] You play the same character as in the Criticism, I have nothing to say to you any more than to Mrs. Du Parc. [To Mrs. Croisy.] As for you, you represent one of those persons who are sweetly charitable to all the world, those women who speak contemptibly of all, and would be very sorry if they suffered their neighbour to be praised. I believe you will perform this part very well. [To Mrs. Hervey.] And for you, you are a conceited Abigail, who is always thrusting herself into conversation, and catching as many of her mistress's terms as possible. I tell you all your characters, that you may imprint them strongly in your minds.

Let us begin to repeat, and see how it will do.  
Oh, here is what we wanted, a curious impertinent.

## S C E N E II.

TORRILLIERE, MOLIERE, BRE COURT,  
LA GRANGE, DU CROISY, MESDEMOI-  
SELLES DU PARC, BEJART, DE BRIE,  
MOLIERE, DU CROISY, HERVEY.

TORRILLIERE.

**G**OOD-MORROW, Mr. Moliere.  
Moliere. Sir, your servant. [Aside.] The  
duce take the fellow!

Torrilliere. How goes it?

Moliere. Very well, at your service. [To the  
actresses.] Ladies, do not——

Torrilliere. I come from a place where I have  
been saying a vast number of fine things of you.

Moliere. I am obliged to you. [Aside.] Plague  
take thee! [To the actors.] Have a little care——

Torrilliere. You play a new piece to-day, do  
you?

Moliere. Yes, Sir. [To the actresses.] Do not  
forget——

Torrilliere. The king obliges you to do it, hey?

Moliere. Yes, Sir. [To the actors.] Pray re-  
member to——

Torrilliere. What do you call it?

Moliere. Yes, Sir.

Torrilliere. I ask what you call it.

Moliere. Why really I do not know. [To the  
actresses.] If you please you must——

Torrilliere. In what manner shall you be dres-  
sed?

Moliere. Just as we are now. [To the actors.]  
Pray now——

Torrilliere. When do you begin?

Moliere. When the king comes. [Aside.] Duce  
take the question-monger!

Torrilliere. When do you think he will come?

Moliere. Indeed, Sir, I do not know.

Torrilliere. Do not you know——

Moliere. Look you, Sir, I am the most ignorant man in the world, I know nothing of whatever you may ask me I protest to you. [Aside.] I am mad, this troublesome fop comes with an air of tranquillity asking one questions, and never considers that one has other things in one's head.

Torrilliere. Ladies, your servant.

Moliere. Good. Now he is got on the other side.

Torrilliere to Mrs Croisy.] You are as lovely as a little angel. Do you play, both of you, to-day?

[Looking on Mrs. Hervey.

Mrs. Croisy. Yes, Sir.

Torrilliere. The comedy would be very little worth if you had not a part in it.

Moliere whispering the actresses.] Will not you send that man there a-going?

Mrs. De Brie to Torrilliere.] Sir, we have something to repeat together.

Torrilliere. Pray do not be hindered by me. You having to do but go on.

Mrs. De Brie. But——

Torrilliere. No, no, I should be very sorry to disturb any body; do freely what you have to do.

Mrs. De Brie. Yes, but——



Torrilliere. I am a man of no ceremony, I tell you, and you may repeat any thing you chuse.

Moliere. Sir, these ladies are unwilling to tell you, that they could wish no body were here, during this rehearsal.

Torrilliere. Why? there is no danger as to me.

Moliere. Sir, it is a custom which they observe, and you will be more delighted when things surprize you.

Torrilliere. I will go let them know then that you are ready.

Moliere. Pray do not be in such a hurry, Sir.

### SCENE III.

MOLIERE, BRECOURT, LA GRANGE, DU CROISY, MESDEMOISELLES DU PARC, BEJART, DE BRIE, MOLIERE, DU CROISY, HERVEY.

MOLIERE.

**W**HAT a vast number of impertinents there are in the world! Well, come, let us begin. First then imagine that the scene is in the king's anti-chamber, for that is a place where witty things enough daily pass. It is easy to bring there all the persons we have a mind to, and we may even find reasons to warrant the coming in of the women which I introduce. The comedy begins with two marquisses meeting each other. [To La Grange.] Remember you to come as I told you, there, with that air which is called the Bel Air, combing your peruke, and humming a tune between your teeth. Fal la l de rol lol lol. Do you range yourselves then, for the two marquisses

must have room, they are not people to be contained in a little bounds. [To La Grange.] Come, speak.

La Grange. "Good-morrow, marquis."

Moliere. Alas! marquisses do not speak in that tone; you must take it a little higher, the most part of these gentlemen affect a particular manner of speaking, to distinguish themselves from the vulgar. *Good-morrow, Marquis.* Begin again.

La Grange. "Good-morrow, Marquis."

Moliere. "Hah! Marquis, your servant."

La Grange. "What dost thou do here?"

Moliere. "'Sdeath! you see I wait till all these gentlemen have unstopped the door to shew my face there."

La Grange. "What a prodigious croud there is! I do not care to thrust my nose in amongst them, and had much rather be last in going in."

Moliere. "There are twenty people who are certain they will not get in, and yet will not forbear crouding and taking up all the avenues of the gate."

La Grange. "Let us bawl out both our names to the porter, that he may call us in."

Moliere. "That is well enough for thee, but for my part I will not be played by Moliere."

La Grange. "However, marquis, I think it was you he played in his Criticism."

Moliere. "I! you are very much mistaken, it was yourself."

La Grange. "Hah! faith you are good enough to apply your own character to me."

Moliere. "I'gad, you are a pleasant mortal, to give to me what belongs to yourself."

La Grange laughing.] "Ha, ha, ha! that is drole."

Moliere laughing.] "Ha, ha, ha! that is comical."

La Grange. "What! you will maintain that it is not you that is played in the character of the marquis in the School for Wives Criticised."

Moliere. "It is true; it is I. *Detestable, 'death! detestable, cream-tart.* It is I, it is I, it is certainly no one else."

La Grange. "Yes, i'gad, it is you, you have no need to rally; and if you will, we will lay a wager, and see which of us is in the wrong."

Moliere. "And what will you lay?"

La Grange. "I will lay an hundred pistoles that it is you."

Moliere. "And I, an hundred pistoles that it is you."

La Grange. "A hundred pistoles down."

Moliere. "Down. Ninety pistoles upon Amyntas, and ten pistoles down."

La Grange. "I will."

Moliere. "It is done."

La Grange. "Your money runs a great risque."

Moliere. "Your's is well ventured."

La Grange. "Who shall determine it?"

Moliere to Brecourt.] "Here is a man that shall judge us. Chevalier."

Brecourt. "What?"

Moliere. So, there is another takes the tone of a marquis. Did not I tell you that you played a part wherein you should speak naturally?

Brecourt. True.

Moliere. Come then. "Chevalier?"

Brecourt. "What?"



Moliere. "Judge between us on a wager we have laid."

Brecourt. "And what is it?"

Moliere. "We dispute who is the marquis of Moliere's Criticism; he lays it is me, and I lay it is him."

Brecourt. "And I judge that it is neither of you; you are both fools to apply such things to yourselves; and this is what I heard Moliere complain of the other day, speaking to persons who charged him with the same thing that you do. He said that nothing displeased him so much as being accused of having an eye to some particular persons in the pictures he draws: that his design is to paint the manners, without touching the person; and that all the characters he represents are airy characters, and properly phantoms, which he dresses according to his fancy to please the spectators: that he should be very sorry if he had marked any body in them; and that if any thing was capable of disgusting him against writing comedies, it was the resemblances which people will always find in them, and the notion which his enemies maliciously endeavour to keep up, to do him ill offices with some people whom he never thought of. And indeed I find he is in the right; for why pray should people apply all his gestures and all his words, and endeavour to bring him into quarrels by saying openly, he plays such a one, when they are things which may fit a hundred persons? As the main design of comedy is to represent in general all the imperfections of men, and principally of the men of our age, it is impossible for Moliere to write any character which will not hit some one or other; and if he must be ac-

“cused of having aimed at all the persons in whom  
“the faults he describes are to be found, he must  
“certainly give over writing comedies.”

Moliere. “Faith, Chevalier, you have a mind  
“to justify” Moliere, “and spare our friend there.”

La Grange. “Not at all; it is you he spares,  
“and we will get other judges.”

Moliere. “Be it so. But, Chevalier, do not you  
“think, that your Moliere is exhausted now, and  
“that he will find no more matter for——

Brecourt. “More matter? Ah dear marquis, we  
“shall always furnish him with enough, and we  
“do not take the way to grow wiser for all that  
“he does, and all that he says.”

Moliere. Stay. You must mark all this passage  
more. Here me speak it——“And that he will  
“find no more matter for——more matter? Ah!  
“dear Marquis, we shall always furnish him with  
“enough; and every thing that he does and says  
“never makes us wiser. Do you think he has  
“exhausted in his comedies all the ridicule of man-  
“kind? And, without going from court, has he  
“not still twenty characters of people he has not  
“yet touched upon? Has he not for example  
“those who profess the greatest friendship in the  
“world, and who, as soon as their backs are turn-  
“ed, esteem it a piece of gallantry to tear one ano-  
“ther in pieces? Has he not those egregious syc-  
“phants, those insipid flatterers, who do not sea-  
“son with the least salt the praises they bestow,  
“and all whose flatteries have a fulsome-ness which  
“makes those that hear them sick at heart? Has he  
“not those base occasional courtiers, those perf-  
“idious adorers of fortune, who praise you in pro-  
“sperity and run you down in adversity? Has he

" not those who are always discontent with the  
 " court, those useless attendants, those trouble-  
 " some assiduous creatures, those people I say who  
 " can only reckon their importunities for services,  
 " and who expect a reward for having besieged the  
 " king ten years running? Has he not those who  
 " equally caress every body, who hand round their  
 " civilities from right to left, and run to all they  
 " see with the same embraces, and the same pro-  
 " testations of friendship? Sir, your most obedient  
 " humble servant; Sir, I am entirely devoted to  
 " you. Reckon me amongst yours, my dear.  
 " Esteem me, Sir, as the warmest of your friends.  
 " Sir, I am delighted to see you. Do me the fa-  
 " vour to employ me, be persuaded that I am en-  
 " tirely yours. You are the man of all the world  
 " I esteem the most; there is nobody I honour e-  
 " qual to you; I beseech you to believe it; I con-  
 " jure you not to doubt it; your servant, most  
 " humble slave. Go, go, marquis, Moliere will  
 " always have more subjects than he desires, and  
 " every thing that he has touched upon hitherto  
 " is but a trifle in comparison of what remains."  
 This should be played in this manner.

Brecourt. Enough.

Moliere. Continue.

Brecourt. " Here is Climene and Eliza."

Moliere to Mrs. Du Parc and Mrs. Moliere.]

Upon which you two are to come. [To Mrs. Du  
 Parc.] Do you take care to make grimaces as you  
 ought, and to be very ceremonious. This will be  
 a little constraint upon you, but we must sometimes  
 do so.

Mrs. Moliere. "Certainly, madam, I knew you



"a great way off, and saw plainly by your air that  
"it could be nobody but you.

Mrs. Du Parc. "I am come to wait here, do  
"you see, till a man comes out with whom I have  
"some business."

Mrs. Moliere. "And so am I."

Moliere. "Ladies, these trunks will serve you  
"for elbow-chairs."

Mrs. Du Parc. Come, madam, pray take  
"your place."

Mrs. Moliere. "After you, madam."

Moliere. Very well. After these little dumb  
ceremonies, let every one take their place and speak  
fitting, except the marquisses, who must sometimes  
sit and sometimes stand, according to their mutu-  
al restlessness. "'Sdeath, Chevalier, you ought  
"to give your rowlers physic."

Brecourt. "How?"

Moliere. "They are very bad."

Brecourt, "Your punster's servant."

Mrs. Moliere. "Lard! madam, I think your  
"complexion is of a dazzling whiteness, and your  
"lips of an amazing flame-colour."

Mrs. Du Parc. "Ah! What do you say, ma-  
"dam? Do not look at me, I am very ugly to-day."

Mrs. Moliere. "Lift up your hood a little, ma-  
"dam, if you please."

Mrs. Du Parc. "Fie! I am quite shocking, I  
"tell you, and quite frighten myself."

Mrs. Moliere. "You are so beautiful!"

Mrs. Du Parc. "No, no."

Mrs. Moliere. "Shew yourself."

Mrs. Du Parc. "Oh! pray do not."

Mrs. Moliere. "Pray now."

Mrs. Du Parc. "Lard! no."

Mrs. Moliere. "Yes, do."

Mrs. Du Parc. "You vex me."

Mrs. Moliere. "One moment."

Mrs. Du Parc. "Ah!"

Mrs. Moliere. "Positively you shall shew yourself, we cannot bear not to see you."

Mrs. Du Parc. "Lard! What a strange person you are! you are furiously set upon what you have a mind to."

Mrs. Moliere. "Ah! madam, I will swear you have no disadvantage in appearing in full light. How cruel people are, who say that you lay on something! Truly, I shall now be able to disprove them."

Mrs. Du Parc. "Alas! I do not so much as know what they call laying on something. But where are these ladies going?"

Mrs. De Brie. "Allow us, ladies, to tell you, by the bye, the most agreeable news in the world. There is Mr. Lyfidas come to let us know, that there is a play made against Moliere, which is to be performed by the grand comedians."

Moliere. "It is true, they would have read it to me, and it is one called Br—Brou—Broufsaut that made it."

Du Croisy. "Sir, it is posted up under the name of Boursalt; but to tell you the secret, several people have set their hand to this work, and a pretty high expectation ought to be conceived of it. As all the authors and all the comedians look on Moliere as their greatest enemy, we are all united to do him a disservice; every one of us has given a stroke of the pencil to his picture, but we take care not to put our

“ names to it: It would have been too glorious  
 “ for him to sink in the eyes of the world, under  
 “ the efforts of all Parnassus; and to render his de-  
 “ feat more ignominious, we have chosen an author  
 “ without reputation on purpose.”

Mrs. Du Parc. “ For my part, I own to you,  
 “ that it gives me great delight.”

Moliere. “ I am glad at it too. I gad the jest-  
 “ er shall be jested on, he shall be under the claw  
 “ i’faith.”

Mrs. Du Parc. “ That will teach him to sati-  
 “ rize every body. What? would the impertinent  
 “ fellow have us women to be destitute of wit?  
 “ does he condemn all our elevated expressions,  
 “ and pretend that we should never talk in any  
 “ but a low style?”

Mrs. De Brie. “ Language is nothing; but he  
 “ censures all our attachments, however innocent  
 “ they may be, and according to his way of talk-  
 “ ing, it is being criminal to have merit.”

Mrs. Du Croisy. “ That is insupportable; there  
 “ is no woman can do any thing for the future.  
 “ What business has he to disturb our husbands,  
 “ and, by opening their eyes, make them perceive  
 “ things they never thought of?”

Mrs. Bejart. “ All that is not worth minding,  
 “ but he even satirizes virtuous women, and this  
 “ wicked buffoon calls them virtuous she-devils.”

Mrs. Moliere. “ It is an impertinent mortal, he  
 “ ought to have his pennyworth of it.”

Du Croisy. “ The representation of this come-  
 “ dy, madam, will have need of being supported,  
 “ and the comedians of the hotel”——

Mrs. Du Parc. “ They need not be in the least



"fear about their piece, I will venture my life on  
"the success of it.

Mrs. Moliere. You are in the right, madam,  
"too many people are concerned to think it good.  
"I will leave you to imagine if all those who think  
"themselves satirized by Moliere will not take  
"the opportunity to be revenged on him by ap-  
"plauding this comedy."

Brecount ironically.] "Certainly, and for my  
"part I can answer for twelve marquisses, six ro-  
"mantic ladies, twenty coquettes, and thirty cuck-  
"olds, who will not fail to clap it."

Mrs. Moliere. Really. What is the reason that  
"he offends all these persons, and particularly  
"cuckolds, who are the best people in the world?"

Moliere. "By the stars, I am told that they will  
"pay off both him and all his comedies in a hand-  
"some manner, and that all his comedians and  
"authors, from the cedar to the hyssop, are devil-  
"ishly animated against him."

Mrs. Moliere. "It will fit him but right. Why  
"does he write odious pieces which all Paris go  
"to see, and wherein he describes people so well  
"that every body knows themselves in them? Why  
"does not he compose comedies like those of Mr.  
"Lyfidas? he would have nobody against him,  
"and all the authors would speak well of it. It  
"is true that such plays have not that great con-  
"course of people; but in return they are always  
"well written, nobody writes against them, and  
"all those that see them are extremely desirous to  
"think them good."

Du Croisy. "It is true, I have the advantage of  
"not making myself enemies, and of having all  
"my works approved of by the learned."

Mrs. Moliere. "You do well to be satisfied  
"with yourself. That is worth more than all the  
"applauses of the public, and than all the money  
"which may be got by Moliere's pieces. What  
"matter is it to you whether people come to  
"your plays, provided they are approved of by  
"the gentlemen your brethren?"

La Grange. "But when do they perform the  
"Painter's Picture?"

Du Croisy. "I do not know, but I shall be in  
"the utmost readiness to appear in the first row  
"to clap it."

Moliere. "And so shall I."

La Grange. "And I likewise, as I hope to be  
"saved."

Mrs. Du Parc. "For my part, I will shew my-  
"self a woman there as I ought, and answer for  
"a bravery of approbation, which shall rout all  
"the adverse judges; it is really the least thing  
"we ought to do, to support with our praises the  
"revenger of our interests."

Mrs. Moliere. "It is well said."

Mrs. De Brie. "And what we all must do."

Mrs. Bejart. "Certainly."

Mrs. Du Croisy. "Undoubtedly."

Mrs. Hervey. "No quarter to this mimicker of  
"people."

Moliere. "I faith, friend Chevalier, your Mo-  
"liere must conceal himself."

Brecourt. "Who, he? I promise you, marquis,  
"he intends to go upon the stage to laugh with  
"all the others at the picture they have drawn of  
"him."

Moliere. "I gad, it will be on the wrong side  
"of his face that he will laugh then."

Breccourt. Come, come, perhaps he will find  
 " more cause to laugh than you imagine : I was  
 " shewed the piece, and as every thing that is a-  
 " greeable in it are actually the thoughts that were  
 " taken from Moliere, the joy which that may  
 " give will undoubtedly have no reason to dis-  
 " please him: for as to the part where they en-  
 " deavour to blacken him, I am the most decei-  
 " ved in the world if any one approve of it. And  
 " as to all the people whom they have strove to  
 " animate against him, because he makes too  
 " great resemblances they say in his pieces, besides  
 " that it has an ill look, I never saw any thing  
 " more foolish, or worse taken, and I never yet  
 " thought that a comedian ought to be blamed for  
 " describing men too justly."

La Grange. " The comedians told me they ex-  
 " pected an answer from him, and that——"

Breccourt. " An answer ! faith I should think  
 " him a great fool if he took the pains to answer  
 " their invectives. Every body very well knows  
 " from what motive they proceed, and the best an-  
 " swer he can make them is a comedy that may  
 " succeed like all his others. That is the true  
 " way of being revenged on them as he ought;  
 " and of the humour I know them to be, I am  
 " well assured that a new piece, which may take  
 " away people from theirs, would vex them more  
 " than all the satires that can be made on their  
 " persons."

Moliere. " But, Chevalier——"

Mrs. Bejart. Let me interrupt the rehearsal a  
 little. [To Moliere.] Allow me to tell you, if I  
 had been in your place I would have carried things  
 otherwise. Every one expects a vigorous answer



from you, and after the manner they tell me that you are treated in this comedy, you ought in justice to say every thing against the comedians, and not to spare one of them.

Moliere. Your talking thus provokes me, and this is the madness peculiar to you women; you would have me take fire at once against them, and after their example go and break out immediately into invectives and abuses. A vast deal of honour I should get by it, and a great deal of vexation I should give them! Are not they readily prepared for such sort of things, and when they are deliberating if they should play the Painter's Picture for fear of an answer, did not some amongst them answer, let him abuse us as much as he will, provided we can get money? Is not that the mark of a soul very sensible of shame, and shall not I be well revenged of them by giving them what they are willing to receive.

Mrs. De Brie. Yet they complained much of three or four words which you said of them in your Criticism, and Romantic Ladies.

Moliere. It is true, those three or four words are very offensive, and they have great reason to quote them. Go, go, it is not that; I have done them no prejudice, only I was so fortunate as to please more than they wished I should. They ridicule my pieces, which I am glad they do; I would not wish to write one to please them, it would not be for my benefit; the whole of their proceedings since we came to Paris, shews plainly what affects them; but they may do their worst, it shall give me no uneasiness.

Mrs. De Brie. However, there certainly can be no pleasure in seeing our writings taken to pieces.

Moliere. As I have got all I wished by my comedy, it is of no consequence to me; as I have had the happiness of pleasing their majesties, whom I make it my study to please, I may be content with its fortune; all other reflections are of no consequence to me. Now, it is attacking the judgment of persons who approved my piece, rather than the writer of it.

Mrs. De Brie. Upon my word, I would play off the little Monsieur Author, who attacks people that do not trouble themselves about him.

Moliere. What a fool you are! Mr. Boursault would have been a fine subject to divert the court indeed! I would like to know how they would fit him out to make him amuse them; and were he to be criticised upon the stage, he would be so happy as to make people laugh. To be played before an august assembly would be doing him too much honour, and that is all he could wish for: he attacks me cheerfully, on purpose that people may know him. As he can lose nothing, he is set up against me by the comedians with an intention to engage me in a silly quarrel, and to divert my time from my other writings, by that foolish artifice, and you are silly enough to be caught by their snare; but I am determined to declare publickly upon this point, to all their criticisms, that I will make no reply; let them take my writings to pieces as much as they please, I shall not differ with them for that; they may new-make them after us, if they chuse it, and bring them upon their stage, and if they will be satisfied with what I can conveniently spare them, I will gladly contribute to their support, by their using my pieces. But there should be bounds set to civility; some things will

not create a laugh either to the person of whom they are spoken, or the spectators. I freely give to them my works, figure, gesture, tone of voice, and manner of reciting, to say and do what they please with; if they are of any benefit to them, I will cheerfully allow all this, and will be pleased if it be serviceable to them. But when I am so civil as to give up so much, they should favour me with the rest, and not attack me in such things as I am told they do. This is all I request of the good gentleman who writes for them, and they will get no other answer from me.

Mrs. Bejart. But really——

Moliere. Really you would make a fool of me. We divert ourselves with talking, instead of rehearsing our play; let us therefore talk no more, but go on. I have forgot whereabouts we were.

Mrs. De Brie. You were at the passage just now——

Moliere. Bless me! the king is certainly come, for I hear a noise, and now we have not time to go through it. You see how foolish it is to trifle away time! You must even do as well as you can for the rest.

Mrs. Bejart. But upon my word, I am afraid, and cannot play till I have rehearsed it all.

Moliere. How! Cannot you play your part?

Mrs. Bejart. No.

Mrs. Du Parc. Nor I mine.

Mrs. de Brie. Nor I neither.

Mrs. Moliere. Nor I.

Mrs. Hervey. Nor can I.

Mrs. Du Croisy. Nor I.

Moliere. Do you all make a jest of me? What do you intend to do?



## S C E N E IV.

BEJART, MOLIERE, LA GRANGE, DU  
CROISY, MESDEMOISELLES DU PARC,  
BEJART, DE BRIE, MOLIERE, DU  
CROISY, HERVEY.

BEJART.

**G**ENTLEMEN, I am come to acquaint you,  
that the king is come, and waits for you to  
begin the play.

Moliere. Oh! Sir, I am distracted just now, the  
women are afraid they cannot play, and tell me  
they must rehearse it before they begin. The  
king is good, he must favour us with a moment  
longer, he is sensible it was done in a hurry.

## S C E N E V.

MOLIERE, and the same actors, except Bejart.

MOLIERE.

**P**RAY do endeavour to recover yourselves; I  
beg you will take courage.

Mrs. Du Parc. You should go and excuse your-  
self.

Moliere. How can I excuse myself?

## S C E N E VI.

MOLIERE, and the same actors, A BUSY-BODY.

A BUSY-BODY.

GENTLEMEN, begin.

Moliere. In a little, Sir. I believe I shall go mad in this business, and——

## S C E N E VII.

MOLIERE, and the same actors, A SECOND BUSY-BODY:

A SECOND BUSY-BODY.

GENTLEMEN, begin.

Moliere. This minute, Sir. [To his companions.] Can I have the assurance——

## S C E N E VIII.

MOLIERE, and the same actors, A THIRD BUSY-BODY.

A THIRD BUSY-BODY.

GENTLEMEN, begin.

Moliere. Sir we are just going to begin. How busy these people are to come and desire us to begin, when the king did not send them to do it!

SCENE IX.

MOLIERE, and the same actors, A FOURTH  
BUSY-BODY.

A FOURTH BUSY-BODY.

**G**ENTLEMEN, begin.

Moliere. Yes, Sir. What then! shall I  
have the confusion——

SCENE THE LAST.

BEJART, MOLIERE, and the same actors.

MOLIERE.

**S**IR, you are come to desire us to begin, but—  
Bejart. No, gentlemen, I come to inform  
you that the king has been told of the confusion  
you are in, and will, in his goodness, take any co-  
medy now, and have the new one afterwards, when  
they are all more perfect.

Moliere. Sir, you transport me with joy; the  
king has done us an exceeding great favour, by gi-  
ving us time, and we will go and return him  
thanks for his goodness.

END OF VOLUME SECOND.



r

L

e.

—

n

n

o.

n

ne

i-

m